

Chairman Jutila, Chairman Cassano, ranking members and members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

The Connecticut Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists supports SB 104: An Act Establishing a State Civic Network.

The creation of a regulation structure for a statewide civic network would be a win-win for the state of Connecticut.

Currently, CT-N does a great job serving in this capacity with the limited resources it receives from the state. SB 104 would allow the selected nonprofit organization to build on that with the possibility of increasing revenue, paving the way for additional access to legislative and executive branch activities, court proceedings and other civic events.

Access to events and information is crucial for a thriving democracy, but most Connecticut residents have little time to drive to Hartford on a regular basis to watch their government in action. A state civic network can fill that void.

At the same time, this bill would remove the state's burden to fund such a network. CT-N wants to greatly expand its coverage, but most would agree the General Assembly is not in a position to increase funding beyond the roughly \$3 million already allocated each year. By authorizing PURA to set a rate that the state civic networks could then charge cable providers, SB 104 would allow for increased revenue while still ensuring oversight and protection for consumers.

Sincerely,

Bruno Matarazzo Jr.  
Vice President of Communications  
Connecticut Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists