



AMERICAN COMMUNITY TELEVISION

May 8, 2015

For immediate release

Senator Tammy Baldwin (WI) and Senator Ed Markey (MA) Introduce the Community Access Preservation Act (CAP Act)

Senators Tammy Baldwin (WI) and Ed Markey (MA) jointly introduced legislation today to help preserve and protect Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access television channels across the country. The introduction of the Community Access Preservation Act (the CAP Act), was hailed by American Community Television (ACT) as critical to saving hundreds of channels as well as jobs in twenty-two states that passed statewide or state-issued franchising laws since 2005 and those that still have local franchising.

“ACT has been working with these offices and many others to create a solution that will reverse the harm done to PEG access television,” said John Rocco, President of American Community Television. “The CAP Act is critical to the survival of these important local television channels. We are already losing channels and could lose many more if we don’t restore the intent of the Cable Act, which found PEG access television important to local communities and democracy.”

Funding for PEG channels has been eliminated in Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina and Wisconsin. ACT estimates as many as five hundred PEG channels in these states are at risk of shut-down. Additionally, PEG channels in several states have been slammed to the upper 900’s, requiring Basic Tier customers to rent an additionally piece of equipment to see the channels.

“Congress, through the cable acts of 1984 and 1992, intended to make sure that local communities could have PEG access channels and funding in return for the cable operators’ use of public rights-of-way,” said Rocco. “This legislation will restore what Congress intended and helps to secure a local community’s ability to use these channels to communicate. We want to thank Senators Baldwin and Markey for their work to save these channels.”

For over forty-five years, PEG access television has aired local government meetings, community events, educational and nonprofit programming, as well as individual programming. It is estimated there are over 5,000 PEG access channels in the United States with over two million hours of locally produced original programming each year.

For more information on the CAP Act or PEG access television, contact John Rocco, President at john@acomunitytv.org or Bunnie Riedel, Executive Director at riedel@acomunitytv.org or by calling 410-992-4976.

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