



January 27, 2015

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications &
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna G. Eshoo
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications &
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Upton and Walden, Ranking Members Pallone and Eshoo, and Members of the House Energy & Commerce Committee:

For over 37 years, Media Alliance has advocated for media workers, non-profits organizations and social justice activists. We believe media should align with the public interest and be accessible, accountable, decentralized, reflect our country's diversity and be free of government control. Current efforts in modernizing the Communications Act should not lose sight of these goals.

Despite the proliferation of video market entrants and multiple digital platforms, many Americans still depend upon television broadcast content for local news and information. We oppose any efforts to remove the "basic tier" provision. Currently, all "basic" service packages that cable and satellite providers offer must include local and national broadcast channels on the "lowest" service tier, so that access to important information is not only afforded to those willing to pay extra. Many Americans would see their broadcast channels shift to a more expensive tier of service, or possibly go dark. Any legislation that would threaten access to the basic tier is legislation that would threaten diversity in television, and can work to disenfranchise low-income populations.

We urge the committee to think about what local communities would lose if current rules are altered.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Tracy Rosenberg
Executive Director
Media Alliance