



Press Release

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American Community Television Congratulates the City of Knoxville for Successfully Challenging AT&T

American Community Television (ACT) congratulates the City of Knoxville, Tennessee for successfully challenging AT&T in the way it delivers Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access television channels.

A statewide cable franchising law passed in 2008 requires AT&T to provide the equipment to transmit the signal of Community Television of Knoxville (CTV) to its system. In June of 2012, two of the three encoders required to transmit the signal stopped working. AT&T refused to fix the problem and CTV was not carried on AT&T Uverse system for six months.

The City of Knoxville intervened in the situation, appealing to the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA). The TRA ruled that AT&T had to comply with the state law and provide the necessary equipment for the access television channels to be transmitted within 30 days or face a \$1,000 a day fine.

“This is a victory for access channels across the state of Tennessee,” said John Rocco, President of American Community Television. “And it’s a victory for all access channels that have had to deal with AT&T’s shoddy treatment of PEG television.”

For years, PEG access television operators have complained of AT&T’s treatment of PEG channels, especially the way AT&T groups all PEG channels in a region onto a single “channel 99” system. PEG advocates have complained that the channel 99 system doesn’t treat PEG channels the same as all other channels on the Uverse system and it is inaccessible to those with vision impairments.

“Ever since AT&T stepped into the video business PEG channels have been treated shabbily,” said Rocco. “We don’t believe that AT&T complies with the law in its treatment of PEG and it certainly discriminates against the vision impaired community. ACT congratulates the City of Knoxville for taking on AT&T and we encourage our city partners to continue to press AT&T to deliver PEG channels the same as all other cable systems deliver PEG channels.”

American Community Television advocates and educates on behalf of Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access television channels.

To arrange an interview with Mr. Rocco or ACT Executive Director, Bunnie Riedel, please email riedel@acomunitytv.org or call 410-992-4976.