

TESTIMONY FOR BAA FY2022: ANGELIKE CONTIS

Name/Info: Angelike Contis, President of Vermont Access Network/Exec. Director of Mt. Mansfield Community TV. *203 Bridge Street, Richmond, VT 05477, (802) 434-2550*

Hello!

My name is Angelike Contis, calling in from Jericho. I'm President of the Vermont Access Network, which is made of 24 community media centers, including Mt. Mansfield Community TV, where I am the executive director.

I'm speaking on behalf of our 100+ staff members and hundreds of volunteers to request your support of the Vermont Access Network and its PEG TV community media centers with a FY2022 appropriation of \$300,000.

While we TV people would rather spend early 2022 focusing on exciting new stories to tell and new ways to connect Vermonters in difficult times, we must make this request today because our work is in jeopardy; we face decreasing traditional revenue sources, while the needs of our communities grow.

I wanted to share a few numbers. Our network recently did a quick inventory. When it comes to municipal volunteer board meetings alone, we cover 108 towns and cities from the Brattleboro Selectboard to the Richmond Water/Sewer Commission. The list includes a growing number of hybrid meeting series – 130 so far. (If you look at school board meetings we cover, many smaller towns are added to our list.)

The Vermont Access Network is – by far- the largest producer and steward of audiovisual content in the state, with some 18,000 hours of local programming each year – including this one!

That's a lot of hours and minutes, vital to local Democracy in a time when local media is struggling - and it's done by us on some very lean budgets. We provide gavel-to-gavel coverage and archives of ENTIRE conversations, not just newsbytes. We've spent decades building a solid platform for Vermonters to dialogue on many topics, not always agreeing, but finding a way to work together.

Please help prevent the erosion of this platform by supporting the Vermont Access Network and its 24 PEG TV community media centers with an FY2022 appropriation of \$300,000.

Thank you.