

Testimony before the Vermont Legislature on Feb 8, 2022.

Re: Governor's FY 2023 recommended state budget.

Good evening. My name is Robert Perry and I am the Executive Director of the Mad River Valley Public Access Television station. Our station is a Vermont Access Media Organization (AMO). As a PEG station our mission is to provide public, educational and government content to our community. In our case, this is the towns of Fayston, Moretown, Waitsfield and Warren.

I ask that you support the \$600,000 proposed in the FY23 budget to support the work of Vermont Access Media Organizations.

By showing and archiving local content, particularly municipal meetings, school sports and events, and local activities, we support meet an important need in our community. The pandemic has increased the value we provide by allowing remote participation and replays of municipal meetings and enabled parents to "join" school events even when spectators are not allowed. We capture and show all the local select board meetings, Harwood Unified Union School District board meetings, and other meetings. Recently, we live-streamed Troy Wunderle's BigTop with the Waitsfield Elementary school. Parents could not attend, but we were able to bring them to the performance through our channel. Over 400 viewers connected to our website to watch the show.

Our work connects the community and supports the democratic process of our governments.

At this time, we face serious and consequential funding challenges. Cord cutting is reducing cable revenue and therefore our cable grant. In fact, we're losing around 5% revenue a year. From 2020 to 2021 our Cable grant dropped from by 7% from \$114,500 to \$106,500.

To counter the dwindling number of cable subscribers, MRVTV now streams our channels from the website so anyone, anywhere can connect to the happenings in the Mad River Valley.

However, this is not without added cost in time and equipment. As a result, we have decreasing revenue and increasing costs that will require us to cut back without additional funding.

Again, I ask that you support the \$600,000 for the Vermont AMOs proposed for the FY23 budget. This funding is essential to keep the AMOs above water and allow us to continue to provide the important content that connects our communities. Thank you.