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House of Commons

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Mr. Chris Seidl
Secretary General (Acting)
Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N2

Dear Mr. Seidl,

Re: Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2017-365; CRTC Application #2017-0586-5 by Pelmorex Weather Networks (Television) Inc.

I am pleased to be writing to you, on behalf my constituents in the riding of Milton, to express full support for the application by Pelmorex for the continued and permanent distribution of The Weather Network and MétéoMédia on the basic television service.

The Milton riding consists of a large volume of commuters, from rural and suburban areas, who rely on the most accurate weather to plan their travel accordingly. This is why having affordable and convenient access to the weather information, road reports and alerts provided by The Weather Network are critical for residents of my riding.

As part of the \$25/month basic service package, The Weather Network is the most accessible source of this information available. I support The Weather Network's continued distribution on the basic service because it is an essential public service that keeps my constituents informed and safe, regardless of where they live.

Moving The Weather Network to a more expensive programming package would make it unaffordable, and the service unavailable, to many of my constituents, and indeed many Canadians. Seniors, low-income households and those who live in areas with limited access to broadband internet would be particularly disadvantaged by losing access to 24/7 weather information at a low cost. On the other hand, I do not believe any Canadians would benefit by making The Weather Network more expensive, and less accessible.

Pelmorex's operation and funding of the backbone infrastructure of our national public alerting system also makes a unique contribution to public safety at no additional cost to taxpayers. Its ongoing operation of the National Alert Aggregation and Dissemination System has been a successful private-public partnership. Enabling government agencies to send immediate and potentially lifesaving alerts has benefitted all Canadians. That it is provided on top of an already essential broadcast service, at no extra cost, is something that should be commended and emulated.

The constituents of Milton, and Canadians rely on The Weather Network being available on the basic television service so they can access the up to date weather and road information, and active weather alerts they need. I hope they CRTC ensures this will continue to be the case in the future.

Thank you for your consideration,

The Honourable Lisa Raitt, P.C., M.P.
Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition