

East County Democratic Club

A Progressive Civic Organization representing the East County since 1965

PO Box 252, El Cajon, CA 92022; 619-820-5321

September 25, 2006

Kathi Henry
City Manager
City of El Cajon
200 E. Main St.
El Cajon, CA 92020

Dear Kathi:

This letter is concerning the use of the Government Access Channel on Cox Cable, servicing the El Cajon area.

1. According to City Policy A-25, "Use of Government Access Channel under CATV Franchise," preferences are listed to define how material will be shown on the channel. At this time, there are a number of educational videos being aired which fall into the last category of preference, #4. Specifically, "Setting the Record Straight: American History in Black & White" and "The Role of Pastors & Christians in Civil Government", both videos by David Barton and distributed under the "WallBuilders.org" label.

David Barton is not a historian. He presents a slanted point of view that is biased toward Republicans and Christianity. He promotes the idea that there should be no church/state separation, that it is OK to lobby and campaign from the pulpit, and that Democrats are slimes and Republicans are good and moral. As the Vice-Chair of the Texas Republican Party, it is certainly not surprising that his features provide such a slant. It is a prescription for a biased point of view, and since Mr. Barton is a person who has no historian credentials, these features are of questionable factual quality. Indeed, many web sites take him to task for distorting history with half-truths and narrow focus.

Our club seriously objects to these videos being aired on the City airwaves. It is not the job of the City to tutor Pastors and Christians in their role in government. That video in particular is in clear violation of the policy that "Programming which directly promotes religious beliefs or religious philosophies shall not be presented on the Channel." (Page 4 of 5 of Policy A-25) since it mentions only Christianity, as if that is the only religion that exists in our fine City. In addition, it is in violation of several FCC laws regarding the promotion of any particular religious belief.

==> Please discontinue airing the "The Role of Pastors & Christians in Civil Government" and rely on the Christian churches in the area to show that to their members if they desire. I understand that Council Member Bob McClellan is already offering private presentations to Bible studies and Churches, so it is not necessary to also air it on the City channel. If you continue to air this video, we fear you will be open to legal action that may be expensive and embarrassing to the City. Please confirm that this film will be discontinued.

2. We would like to request a counter-balance those one-sided videos with educational films of current events. Specifically, we would like to request that the film "The Big Buy", a story about Tom Delay, be

aired. We can supply the video on DVD or any format you may specify. The producers of the film (Brave New Films) have no copyright restrictions as they encourage screenings everywhere. This film is an excellent review of events surrounding the illegal corporate campaign financing resulting in the re-redistricting of Texas and the corresponding increase in Republicans in the Federal House of Representatives, as well as the indictments brought forward by Ronnie Earle against Delay and a host of illegal corporate contributors. These are factual events and it is extremely important that the public understands the criminal behavior of these politicians and the unfortunate results. It is about 1 hour and 20 minutes, which is the standard broadcast length.

Because we are in an election season, and because you are airing videos of a partisan nature (i.e. from the Vice Chair of the Texas Republican Party, David Barton) it is essential that we get "The Big Buy" video on the air as soon as reasonably possible to balance that partisan position. Indeed, we feel the City has been airing videos that are very partisan and in direct violation of City policy for years. Yet, we are confident that our City is fair about these political matters, so we expect you will allow "The Big Buy", as well as other videos we might suggest, to be shown to balance the current partisan slant. Please have your technical personnel call me immediately at 619-820-5321 to provide the exact specifications for the media you require.

3. I would like to formally request that we be allowed to advertise our Club on the Bulletin Board that is aired on that channel. Our club is a civic organization that has been in this area for over 40 years. As such, it is part of the fabric of our City and democracy. At one time, even our present Mayor, the Honorable Mark Lewis, served as President of this club. We don't intend to promote a particular political position or advocate for candidates in our spot, just announce that we exist and that if a resident is interested, they can seek additional information. Such a spot will not conflict with the provisions of the City Policy A-25 because it is not advocating a specific position or candidate, or ballot initiative. Our club is a nonprofit organization.

The proposed spot would read as follows:

The East County Democratic Club

A progressive civic organization representing the East County since 1965.

Participate in monthly meetings and other events

Visit www.EastCountyDemocraticClub.org or call 619-820-5321 for more information.

We would be happy to provide an artistically rendered slide if that is what you need. Again, please have your technical personnel contact me to work out the details.

We appreciate your kind assistance.

Warm personal regards,

Raymond Lutz

President

East County Democratic Club

PO Box 252, El Cajon, CA 92022

619-820-5321

email: raylutz@EastCountyDemocraticClub.org