

Dear Division of Budget,

Unable to attend a public hearing on the budget process, I write today to submit a comment on the budget process. I urge the budget office to continue funding public broadcasting (television and radio) through the State Education Department office of Educational Television and Public Broadcasting. I respectfully request that funding levels, at a minimum, remain the same as current year funding. I also seek consideration for increased funding to support New York State's wonderful public television and radio resources.

Over the years, WAER has benefited greatly from funds provided by the State Education Department, other grant programs and member items. Last year, WAER was able to add an additional channel through its High Definition radio platform thanks to State funds. As a result, radio listeners in the Central New York community now have more educational radio options than before. State funds and other grants are sometimes the only way that non-commercial, public radio stations can keep pace with emerging technologies and our communities need to access programming through those technologies. Additionally, State funds assist public stations with the development and production of valuable locally produced programs that address community needs and concerns. WAER's award-winning local news and sports coverage and diverse cultural programs are made possible by your support.

New York State can lay claim to some of the most dynamic and well respected public broadcasting entities in the country. We thank you for your continued support and recognition of public broadcasting as a valuable American resource and we urge you to continue lending your support through the budget process.

Sincerely,

Joe Lee
Director & General Manager
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