

# WAPC



## Wisconsin Association of PEG Channels

Serving the needs of public, education, and government cable access television stations since 1998.

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PRESS RELEASE

Senator Judy Robson (D – Janesville), Representative Gary Hebl (D – Sun Prairie), Representative Louis Molepske (D – Stevens Point) and the Friends of Oshkosh Community Access Television (OCAT) are recipients of the 2007 Friend of Access Award to be presented by the Wisconsin Association of PEG Channels at a Friday, May 4 Luncheon at the Sheraton Hotel in Madison.

“Sen. Robson, Rep. Hebl, and Rep. Molepske have been true friends in a legislative battle to save local public, education, and government access stations from immediate destruction,” said WAPC President Joel Desprez, who is also the Executive Director of Chippewa Valley Community Television. The Video Competition Bill, sponsored by Rep. Phil Montgomery (R – Ashwaubenon) and Sen. Jeff Plale (D – South Milwaukee) was authored without consulting municipalities and PEG access advocates. The resulting bill would have killed all but a small handful of access channels throughout the state. “It was Sen. Robson, who as Leader of the Senate, insisted that competition and local programming were compatible goals,” said WAPC Executive Director, Mary Cardona. Rep. Hebl “sounded the alarm” in the Assembly and “worked tirelessly to educate his colleagues” about the issue, said Cardona. Rep. Molepske brought forward the whole PEG agenda on the floor of the Assembly. All amendments failed on party line votes. The Friends of OCAT underwrote the cost of establishing and maintaining the website [www.SaveAccessWisconsin.org](http://www.SaveAccessWisconsin.org).

“We have come a long way, but PEG stations do not have a secure future. The bill still needs amending,” said Desprez. WAPC supports a three-year sunset for current PEG funding mechanisms that would become up to a 1% PEG fee that municipalities would determine. Cardona estimates that if the bill were passed today, one station would close and another twenty would be in jeopardy at the end of three years.