

PUBLIC ACCESS
LET'S MAKE PUBLIC ACCESS A TWO-WAY STREET!

We say we believe in transparency, and in some states, some cities and some counties, local TV stations videotape and broadcast city council, county commission or state legislative meetings. This is good. There should be more of it, but the problem is that with an often (sadly) low sized audience, it has usually been small or marginal stations that do this.

We also say we believe in public participation in the governing process. Now, technology has given us an opportunity to enhance that participation in a very real and direct way. And this enhancement would not require ongoing new salary and other new costs (only initial capital/installation costs), so large advertisers would not be required.

Lets install in (a) the state legislature, and b) in each city hall and each county commission office, a two-way video cam with audio system, so that people can come to city hall or the county offices to observe and have input in state legislative hearings whenever public participation is allowed or required.

This would do two good things.

1. It would expand " over time, perhaps hugely " public participation in the law-making process, providing extra ideas and input, and, where the public is very strongly for or against something, making that clear to lawmakers.
2. It would also expand the access that the elderly, handicapped and disabled would have for such participation. Rather than having to get to the state capital, all they would have to do is get to downtown in their town or in the main city in their county, which is something that (if sometimes with assistance) they already generally do.

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