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CAMBRIDGE MA.

The Honorable Alice Wolf  
Office of the Mayor  
795 Massachusetts Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02139

April 12, 1991

Education through  
public broadcasting and  
telecommunications

**WGBH**

125 Western Avenue  
Boston MA 02134  
Telephone 617 492 2777  
Fax 617 787 0714  
Telex 710 330 6887

**Public Television**

Channel 2 Boston  
Channel 44 Boston  
Channel 57 Springfield

**Public Radio**

89.7 FM Boston

**Programming for  
public broadcasting**

Children's  
Cultural  
Drama  
How-to  
Instructional  
Public Affairs  
Science

**Telecommunications**

Interactive Media  
Captioning  
Descriptive Video

Dear Mayor Wolf;

I received and read with great interest the resolution passed by the Cambridge City Council calling for reconsideration of our cancellation of *The Ten O'Clock News*.

Let me first say that I appreciate your recognition of the fine work done by *The Ten O'Clock News* and its predecessors. We too are very proud of *The Ten O'Clock News* and all it has accomplished in the past 15 years. I also appreciate your recognition of WGBH's longstanding service to this community and I want to reassure you that we will indeed continue our commitment to providing programs that address issues of local concern.

But for both editorial and financial reasons, we now believe the time has come to replace *The Ten O'Clock News* with a different nightly, local public affairs program. This decision is one of several tough budget decisions we've had to make as we face the possibility of a several million dollar deficit next year.

We are addressing the problem by cutting administrative and support expenses, eliminating 30 staff positions and scaling down our monthly magazine. But we must also reduce program expenses, and *The Ten O'Clock News* is by far the largest programming expense we have. Out of a total of 13,000 hours we broadcast each year, *The News* represents 520 hours of air time on Channels 2 and 44 -- yet in recent years it has consumed more than one-third of our entire programming budget.

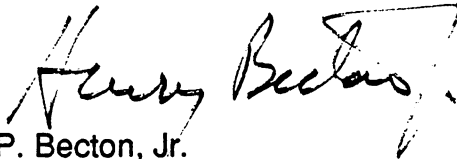
We've spent more than a year assessing how WGBH can continue to make a distinctive contribution to the Boston media environment, considering the ever-increasing number of hours of local news now available. Given our limited resources, we feel our best approach is to concentrate on perspective, commentary and analysis rather than expensive news gathering. So, with reluctance, we will cease production of *The Ten O'Clock News* at the end of May and return in the fall with a new, less costly program.

We have assigned Judy Stoia to develop the new program. She is well respected in this city for her past achievements in this type of programming, including a stint as editor of *The Ten O'Clock News* and as executive producer of Channel 5's *Chronicle* series. We also have invited Chris Lydon and Carmen Fields to participate, on air, on the program.

We regret that we can no longer sustain *The Ten O'Clock News*. But we do not agree that it is the only avenue for thoughtful consideration of local issues. I expect that in time we will be equally proud of our new program as it continues the WGBH tradition of presenting topics of importance to people's lives.

We have a longstanding and strong commitment to local public service programming, in addition to our national efforts, and it is our intention to continue to use our public funds, in the most cost-effective way, to provide programs that give voice to all segments of the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry Becton, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Henry P. Becton, Jr.  
President and General Manager

cc: Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk

# 6

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CONSENT

Communication received from Henry P. Becton,  
President and General Manager of WGBH, re-  
garding the resolution adopted by the City  
Council relative to the cancellation of  
the Ten O'Clock News.

In City Council,

April 29, 1991

*Placed on file.*