

LYNN WOOLSEY
6TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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AND GLOBAL HEALTH

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0506

October 27, 2009

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Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

*Policy Dist
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1/8/11*

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

It is my understanding that you recently received a letter from a coalition of leaders in the deaf and hard-of-hearing community in support of a petition filed by Purple Communications to clarify the rules governing telecommunications relay services (TRS), including video relay services (VRS). In particular, the coalition calls upon the FCC to affirm that: (1) deaf persons may make TRS calls, including conference calls, in the workplace; (2) permissible, appropriate outreach is critical to informing the public about TRS; and (3) providers may continue to offer free or subsidized video relay equipment to potential customers.

Unfortunately, the Consumer Affairs Bureau recently released a ruling unfairly narrowing the rights of deaf and hard-of-hearing people with regard to their participation in conference calls. As you may know, part of the Purple petition was denied, while the remaining aspects of the petition were not addressed. Disappointingly, such a decision is inconsistent with an expansive commitment to disability rights

Respectfully, I urge the full Commission to overturn this decision, quickly reimburse the providers that have been inappropriately denied compensation for their calls, work with providers and consumers to design a more specific and transparent reimbursement mechanism, and start the rulemaking process requested by the deaf and hard-of-hearing coalition. It is my belief that these measures will ensure progress towards true functional equivalence.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. Please contact me or Jamie Girard of my staff at (202) 225-5161 with any questions you may have regarding this matter.

6 NOV 2009 RCVD

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Woolsey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress

cc: Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker