

ANDRÉ CARSON
7TH DISTRICT, INDIANA

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
CAPITAL MARKETS, INSURANCE AND
GOVERNMENT SPONSORED ENTERPRISES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY POLICY
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1407

June 11, 2010

The Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Federal Communication Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Chairman Genachowski:

On behalf of my constituents in the 7th District, I am writing to express my concern regarding a proposed change the Video Relay Service (VRS), which could negatively impact the access of the deaf and the hard-of-hearing to telephone services. My constituents depend upon the VRS system to communicate using American Sign Language in order to make routine and emergency phone calls. In keeping with the requirements imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, my constituents believe the VRS system to be the "functional equivalent" of telecommunications services offered to those without hearing problems.

I am also concerned that the Commission intends to move away from the unanimously adopted long-term compensation method to a "cost plus" method that may not account for the true cost of providing VRS. This cost plus compensation method may also result in certain VRS providers being paid as much as 50% more than others providing the same service.

Prior to the implementation of any of these proposed changes, even on an interim basis, I request that you provide to Congress the reasons for this decision, which could adversely impact the deaf and the hard-of-hearing. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to work with you to better understand the most effective means of promoting efficiency and for improving access to VRS technology. I believe a rate structure that is fair and predictable encourages innovation. I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



André Carson
Member of Congress

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