

JO ANN EMERSON
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
8TH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-2508

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

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I appreciate the Federal Communications Commission's decision to begin the rulemaking process regarding retransmission consent negotiations. This is an issue of great concern to the rural pay-TV providers in Southern Missouri, and I encourage you to complete this proceeding in time for any new rules to govern this year's retransmission consent negotiations.


I've heard from a number of my state's smaller pay-TV providers about how the video marketplace has fundamentally changed since the introduction of the retransmission consent framework nearly two decades ago. As a result of these changes, I've been told negotiations breakdown more frequently, consumers lose broadcast signals more often, and retransmission consent fees rise more quickly, resulting in significant inconvenience to consumers and higher pay-TV bills.

In light of these problems, I'm pleased the FCC is looking into this matter. Examining whether the retransmission consent rules have failed to keep up with significant changes in the video marketplace since 1992 is appropriate, timely, and important. Moreover, examining specific rule changes to help protect consumers, allow retransmission consent negotiations to proceed more smoothly, and provide greater certainty to the negotiating parties also is proper.

I appreciate your efforts to tackle this difficult issue but urge you to complete this rulemaking in time for any adopted rule changes to govern this year's carriage talks. With more than a thousand carriage deals set to expire by the end of this year, it is essential that the Commission have new rules in place to help avoid the types of carriage disruptions for consumers that we've seen increasingly occur.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and I look forward to hearing from you on this matter of importance that affects my constituents.

Sincerely,



JO ANN EMERSON
Member of Congress

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