



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Renee Ellmers
U.S. House of Representatives
1210 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Ellmers:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

Section 629 of the Communications Act, adopted by Congress in 1996, requires the Commission to promote competition in the market for devices that consumers use to access their pay-television content. Yet, unfortunately, the statutory mandate in section 629 is not yet fulfilled. The lack of competition in this market has meant few choices and high prices for consumers. In a recent Rasmussen Report Study, 84 percent of consumers felt their cable bill was too high. One of the main contributing factors to these high prices is the no-option, add-on fee for set-top box rental that is included on every bill, forcing consumers to spend, on average, \$231 in rental fees annually. Even worse, a recent congressional investigation found that the price of most equipment fees is determined by what the market will bear, and not the actual cost of the equipment.¹ With the lack of competition in this market, it should come as little surprise that fees for set-top boxes continue to rise.² Clearly, consumers deserve better.

This February the Commission put out for public comment a proposal that would fulfill the statutory requirement of competitive choice for consumers. This action opened a fact-finding dialog to build a record upon which to base any final decisions. Our record already contains more than 280,000 filings, the overwhelming majority of which come from individual consumers. FCC staff is actively engaged in constructive conversations with all stakeholders—content creators, minority and independent programmers, public interest and consumer groups, device manufacturers and app developers, software security developers, and pay-TV providers of all sizes—on how to ensure that consumers have the competition and choice they deserve. I am hopeful that these discussions will yield straight-forward, feasible and effective rules for all.

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I share your goal of ensuring that pay-TV subscribers in all parts of our country can enjoy the benefits of consumer choice without unduly burdening small providers of pay-TV. Recognizing the important role that small pay-TV providers play in many rural communities, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) adopted in February seeks comment how this proceeding could affect these providers. Notably, the NPRM proposes to exempt all analog cable systems from new requirements while also seeking comment on the American Cable Association's proposal to exempt all pay-TV providers serving one million or fewer subscribers from any rules. The NPRM further asks how the Commission can ensure that any rules adopted are not overly burdensome to pay-TV providers. We are continuing to engage with all stakeholders on this issue, including small pay-TV providers. Customers of providers of all sizes deserve choice and innovation, and I am confident that we will be able to find a balance that accurately reflects the technology and resources available to truly small providers.

The record we are developing will help us avoid overburdening small pay-TV providers while delivering all American consumers meaningful choice. Thank you for your engagement in this proceeding, and I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important consumer issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Tom Emmer
U.S. House of Representatives
503 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Emmer:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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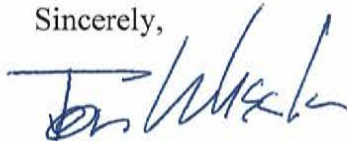
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Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Stephen Fincher
U.S. House of Representatives
2452 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Fincher:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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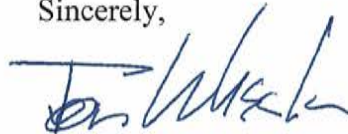
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
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July 11, 2016

The Honorable Bob Gibbs
U.S. House of Representatives
329 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gibbs:

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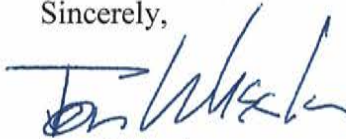
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Sincerely,

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Paul Gosar
U.S. House of Representatives
504 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gosar:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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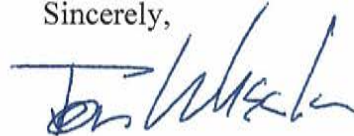
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Sam Graves
U.S. House of Representatives
1415 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Graves:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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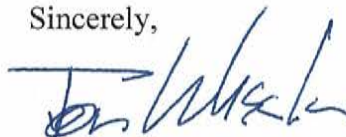
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Tom Wheeler



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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July 11, 2016

The Honorable Morgan Griffith
U.S. House of Representatives
1108 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Griffith:

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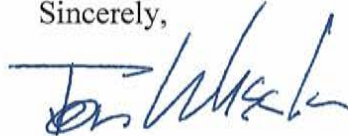
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July 11, 2016

The Honorable Glenn Grothman
U.S. House of Representatives
501 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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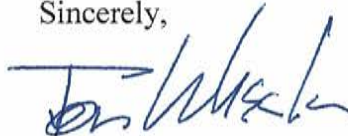
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Dear Congressman Guinta:

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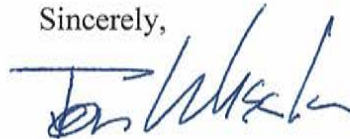
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
U.S. House of Representatives
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Guthrie:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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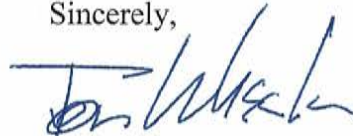
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Sincerely,

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Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Richard Hudson
U.S. House of Representatives
429 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hudson:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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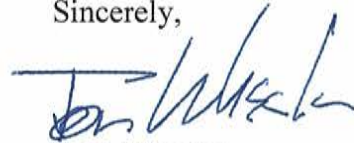
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Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Tim Huelskamp
U.S. House of Representatives
1110 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Huelskamp:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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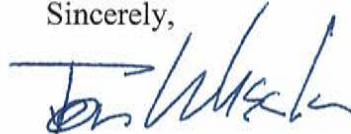
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Will Hurd
U.S. House of Representatives
317 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hurd:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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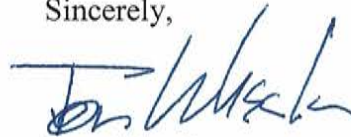
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Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Lynn Jenkins
U.S. House of Representatives
1526 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Jenkins:

Thank you very much for your letter sharing your views about how the Commission's proceeding for better fostering competition in the set-top box and navigation app marketplace might impact small pay-TV providers. I take your input on this issue seriously and assure you that it will receive careful consideration.

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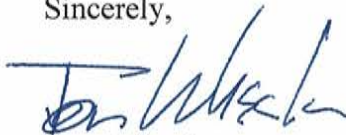
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Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

July 11, 2016

The Honorable Bill Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
1710 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Johnson:

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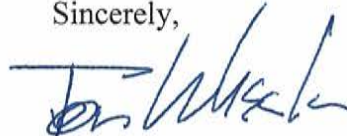
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