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

July 14, 2016

Mr. Thomas Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

I am writing to express my hope that you and your fellow commissioners can find a consensus path forward on the worthwhile goal of retiring the clunky and costly set-top box. Your "Unlock the Box" proposal is commendable for its ambitious and transformative goals. However, concerns have been raised--including by many Members of Congress--regarding its practicality and potential unintended consequences. Industry has engaged in a constructive way, including their recent "Ditch the Box" proposal. I believe common ground can be found.

I hope you and your staff continue to work towards a solution that will inject some needed competition and innovation in the ecosystem, but without increasing the grave risks of online piracy or eroding consumers' right to privacy. In particular, intellectual property must be respected in a practical way. Reasonable accommodations for Americans with disabilities and minority communities must also be accounted for. Consumers should be able to access content on a variety of devices. Some level of openness should be required to enable innovations like universal search, but consumers should retain control of their privacy. And the rules should be flexible and dynamic to reflect the rapidly changing environment.

I thank you for your consideration of this letter, and your consideration of the views of all the Members of Congress who have weighed in on this important matter.

With warmest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

STENY H. HOYER

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