

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

*Re: Closed Captioning of Internet Protocol-Delivered Video Programming:  
Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act  
of 2010, (MB Docket No. 11-154)*

As we continue to implement the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA), I am becoming more and more aware of the importance of this legislation.

To our family members, neighbors, and co-workers living with disabilities, every day presents challenges that the majority of us rarely think about. One of those obstacles is the inability to enjoy wide-ranging video content online with the benefit of captions. The Report and Order we approve today goes a long way toward eliminating that disparity.

Captioned programming on television is currently viewed by people regardless of their hearing abilities. We see, take advantage of, and have grown accustomed to captions on televisions in airports, in fitness centers, restaurants, and other gathering places. But it may surprise many that the ubiquity of captions on the television screen has not resulted in a similar outgrowth for video watched online. It is now time for that to change by using these incredible 21st century technologies. When captioning becomes a part of universal design, everyone wins. For instance, when videos are captioned, deaf and hard of hearing students can learn alongside hearing students. Hearing students see how words are spelled, and the visual text reinforces the message that they hear. All of this helps them learn how to read and write. Out in the community, the information flows much more freely and everyone benefits at home, at school, in the workplace and anywhere that people meet.

The CVAA, from which this rulemaking flows, is one of the most important pieces of legislation for the deaf and hard of hearing community since the passage of the ADA more than two decades ago. In that time, we have seen an explosion of revolutionary Internet-based telecommunications and video programming technologies. Yet, the tremendous promise of these technologies has remained largely inaccessible to Americans who are deaf or hard of hearing. The CVAA intends to bridge this divide.

With the abundance of video content on the Internet, knowing that I can sit in front of my computer and enjoy an online experience, while a deaf or hard of hearing neighbor cannot, is a problem that I am pleased we are finally taking steps to address. But the promise of this rulemaking is much more than closed captioning for Internet-delivered content. Its true aim is equal access for all Americans to the video programming that forms the lifeblood of our civil discourse and the marketplace of ideas embodied in the First Amendment. Its expectation is that the cultural, political, employment, and participatory opportunities of the 21st century will be available to all. And its promise is that accessibility will no longer be an afterthought, and that America

will leverage its national ingenuity and technological prowess, to ensure that accessibility is a cornerstone of Internet video programming, now and into the future.

In this rulemaking, we have fought to ensure that these expectations are fulfilled. While our work is not yet finished, we believe the results of the rule making are a promising first step toward bringing video programming into the 21st century for all Americans.