

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRMAN TOM WHEELER**

Re: *Promoting Innovation and Competition in the Provision of Multichannel Video Programming Distribution Services*, MB Docket No. 14-261.

Today, we begin a process to expand Internet video competition with cable and satellite services. Our proposal will mean more alternatives for consumers beyond the traditional cable or satellite bundle, including giving consumers more options to buy the programming they want. When digital technology made video simply zeroes and ones, it opened up the opportunity for new Internet-based competition to cable and satellite services. Yet efforts by new entrants to develop new video services have faltered because they could not get access to programming content that was owned by cable networks or broadcasters.

With this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the Commission moves to update the Commission's rules to give video providers who operate over the Internet – or any other method of transmission – the same access to programming that cable and satellite operators have. Big company control over access to programming should not keep programs from being available on the Internet. Today, we propose to break that bottleneck.

More specifically, we propose to update our interpretation of the definition of a multichannel video programming distributor (MVPD) to make it technology-neutral. Video is no longer tied to a certain transmission technology, so our interpretation of MVPD should not be tied to transmission facilities. Under our proposal, any providers that make multiple linear streams of video programming available for purchase would be considered MVPDs, regardless of the technology used to deliver the programming. The effect of this change will be to improve the availability of programming that over-the-top providers need and consumers want.

History has shown us how such a change can expand consumer choice. Back in 1992, Congress said that DBS competitors should be able to negotiate in good faith for video content, even if it is owned by cable companies and broadcasters. Greater access to high-demand content spurred the growth of the satellite video business in the 1990s. We propose to do the same thing for over-the-top video providers who deliver content, not via cable or satellite, but via the Internet.

By facilitating access to such content, we expect Internet-based linear programming services to develop as a competitor to cable and satellite. Consumers should have more opportunities to buy the channels they want instead of having to pay for channels they don't want.

Our proposals will also help stimulate additional broadband deployment. An updated definition of MVPD would permit a new broadband competitor to offer customers the ability to reach a variety of over-the-top video packages, without having to enter the video business itself.

This NPRM marks the beginning, not the end of the process. While it proposes to interpret the term MVPD to encompass distributors of multiple linear video programming streams, including Internet-based services, it also asks for comment on an alternative interpretation that would require an MVPD to have control over a transmission path. The NPRM also asks for comment on:

- How each interpretation would impact MVPDs, consumers, and content owners, and how each would promote competition and broadband adoption;
- How the Commission should apply its retransmission consent “good faith” negotiation rules with respect to Internet-based MVPDs to protect local broadcasters; and

- Whether these proposals would affect the regulatory status of IP-delivered video services by cable operators and DBS providers.

This proposal is a big win for consumers and part of the Commission's broader efforts to speed the transition to all-IP networks in a way that serves the public interest – enabling innovation, while preserving core values like competition and consumer choice.