

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *Electronic Delivery of MVPD Communications*, MB Docket No. 17-317; *Modernization of Media Regulation Initiative*, MB Docket No. 17-105

Have you ever felt that you need to get an advanced degree to even come close to interpreting your monthly cable bill? Between annual price hikes, channel lineup changes, and mysteriously labeled fees, rest assured, you are not alone in your frustration.

According to one analyst, between 2011 to 2015, the average cable bill increased nearly eight times the rate of inflation. Compounding this is the increasing use of below-the-line fees, a strategy that the FCC's 18th Annual Video Competition Report described as "rais[ing] monthly bills while typically leaving the advertised prices for video packages unchanged."

Let's be honest, there are some providers that stand to benefit from a state of confusion, which is why the Commission's rules require them to notify their customers in writing of specific information, including rate and service changes; charges for customer service changes; and basic tier availability.

And in a world in which many consumers prefer to receive their monthly bill electronically, it is reasonable for us to consider whether our rules should be modernized to allow these currently required written notifications to be delivered in the same manner in which a bill is received by the customer. What I fear, however, is that if providers are allowed to switch the mode by which this information is delivered, without the consumer's consent, it would give the provider another way to mask price increases and service changes.

It is essential that consumers, not the companies providing the service, be empowered with the choice of how these notifications are delivered, particularly when it comes to how much they pay for monthly service. As originally circulated, the Chairman's proposal would have allowed companies to solely make this decision on behalf of their customers – a move I found troubling.

So I am pleased that my colleagues agreed to scale this section back, by seeking comment on whether the move to electronic notification should be done on an opt in basis by the consumer. As we seek to modernize the delivery of cable communications, we must ensure that it is done in a way that puts #ConsumersFirst.

My thanks to my colleagues and the Media Bureau staff for your work on this item.

