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May 1, 2019

Honorable Ajit Pai, Chairman

Federal Communications Commission

445 12th Street SE

Washington, DC 20554

Re: Reply Comments to Media Bureau on Video Description Marketplace Improvements (DA 19-40)

Dear Chairman Pai:

I am writing to you in support of the comments filed by the American Council of the Blind (ACB) on April 1. Video description is a transformative tool enjoyed by Americans who are sighted, visually impaired, as well as blind. I agree with ACB that the FCC’s report to inform Congress on the video description marketplace should:

* Recommend the expansion of video description to serve all Americans;
* Recommend expanding the required hours of described programming;
* Recommend that video described programming be passed through to consumers, regardless of the means of video delivery; and,
* Recommend the creation of a centralized guide listing for all video described programming.

I am a PBS watcher and I have been very disappointed in the amount of audio described materials broadcast. First of all, why is PBS not mandated to provide audio description? It is public TV, funded with tax dollars and public donations. I believe PBS should be mandated to provide at least as much video described programming as other stations. In particular, Masterpiece Theater is highly rated and highly watched, yet it is not described.

Secondly, I understand that some of the shows produced in Great Britain are audio described but the audio description is stripped from the program before it is aired in the U.S. I would advocate that PBS be required to pass through all video described programming that it receives from content producers to enable watchers in the U.S. to benefit from the audio description that has already been developed.

Thirdly, The PBS news hour flashes facts on screen in between its segments. I have partial vision and can see the print on the screen but cannot read it. It would be very useful to provide narration of these on screen facts.

Sincerely,

Bonnie O’Day