

In the matter of: PETITION:

REPORT#2230

Request Amendment of the Commission's Rules to Update Cable Television Regulations and Freeze Existing Cable Television Rates by

Consumers Union and the Consumer Federation of America and Sandra B. Eskin.  
[MM Docket Nos. 92-264, 92-265, 92-266]

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COMMENTS OF:

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I, Elliot Becker, file these comments on 11-1-97 in full agreement with the petition filed by Consumers Union and Consumer Federation of America calling for an immediate freeze on rates for basic and cable programming services for cable systems subject to regulation, for the FCC to lift its stay of its regulations that establish horizontal ownership limits by cable operators, and to reevaluate current FCC policy on horizontal and vertical ownership limitations and rules prohibiting unfair practices.

Cable television rates in the City of San Diego are escalating as much under regulation as they did under deregulation. The southern half of the City of San Diego is served by Cox Communications only. The northern half is served by Time Warner Cable (dba Southwestern Cable TV) only. Rates have soared to more than \$30 per month for standard tier service. Many of the most popular cable channels are also owned by the cable operators, Thus their argument that rates are escalating due to increased programming costs are hardly credible. Competition has not come to San Diego and has not restrained prices. The local cable monopolies have gotten stronger and FCC rate regulation has not worked. Therefore, an immediate freeze on rates, review of horizontal and vertical integration of Cox and Southwestern by the FCC is needed now as consumers are being gouged.

Submitted by:

*Elliot Becker*  
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11/1/97