



TELE-COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

2/11/98
Leo J. Hindery, Jr.
President
CS97-80

FEB 12 11 24 AM '98

February 11, 1998

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

The Honorable Susan Ness
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 29554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Ness:

Thank you for your kind letter and for the opportunity to clarify the two additional issues you raised regarding TCI's ability to deliver high definition television. The questions and the accompanying explanations are outlined below:

- **Will the devices, as shipped from the manufacturer, be capable of displaying an NTSC picture (on an NTSC set) if the original broadcast signal is transmitted in a format above 480P?**

Yes, with certain stipulations -- TCI's advanced digital set-top devices, as currently specified, will have enough memory and processing speed to accommodate two different HDTV formats. The device will be capable of converting a 480P signal at 30 frames per second (NTSC frame rate) to a standard signal for display on an NTSC set. Additionally, the devices will also be capable of translating a 720P signal at 24 frames per second (film rate) to a standard signal for display on an NTSC set. To display a 720P signal on an NTSC set with the currently specified devices, the signal must be transmitted in film rate at 24 frames per second. At this point, the devices are not configured to translate HDTV signals in the 1080I format, though that remains an alternative should the marketplace move in this direction.

- **Alternatively, if a broadcast signal is transmitted and carried by the cable operator in a format above 480P, will the set top device block it, causing the receiver display to go dark?**

No -- The advanced digital set top devices will pass through any high definition format directly to a high definition television set. The set top device does not block the signal, but a high definition signal can only be received on a high definition television set. In the absence of a high definition television receiver, and without any translation to an NTSC format, the display would likely show white snow.

The Honorable Susan Ness
February 11, 1998
Page Two

TCI continues to encourage marketplace demand and the needs of consumers as the appropriate forces to dictate the direction of HDTV development. As a company, we continually strive to offer customers the advantages of new technologies and I appreciate the opportunity to continue our dialogue as the development of high definition television evolves.

Again, please feel free to call me directly anytime if you have additional questions.

All my best.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'S' or 'N' with a flourish, located below the 'Kind regards,' text.