



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Brenda Lawrence
U.S. House of Representatives
1237 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lawrence:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

The Commission has a statutory obligation under Section 629 of the Communications Act to assure the commercial availability of navigation devices to consumers from sources other than their traditional video programming providers, like cable, satellite, or telecommunications providers. Section 629 of the Communications Act is explicit: "The Commission shall... adopt regulations to assure the commercial availability, to consumers of multichannel video programming... of converter boxes, interactive communications equipment, and other equipment... from manufacturers, retailers, and other vendors not affiliated with any multichannel video program distributor [emphasis added]." The Act further provides that such alternatives must be secure. The issue before the Commission is how to obey Section 629 in a world of evolving technology. A monopoly-provided set top box would appear to be the opposite of the choice inherent in an "app TV" future and contrary to the statutory mandate.

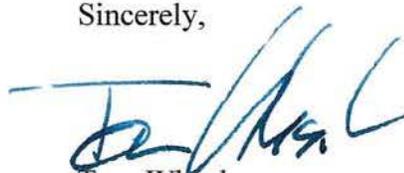
I understand there has been some misinformation that the Commission is currently considering the so called "All-Vid" approach to meeting our obligations under Section 629. I understand your concerns around this approach and can assure you that All-Vid, a 2010 proposal that consumers obtain a separate, additional device in order to access video programming, is not under consideration by the Commission. Technology has moved rapidly forward since 2010 and any Commission proposals will reflect the technological advances and capabilities by manufacturers and innovators.

I also share your goals that public safety and access to minority programming not be adversely affected. Any alternatives the Commission considers will include the critical capabilities to receive emergency alerts, protect privacy and abide by copyright rules. Further,

competition in interfaces, search functions, and integration of programming sources can lead customers to have greater ability to access minority and special interest programming. This is about rising increased access and choice to the top of the pile, not the bottom.

As we continue to explore fulfilling the statutory mandate I look forward to continuing to work with you. I can assure you that we are in complete agreement about reducing consumer costs, lowering energy consumption, encouraging innovative programming, and protecting privacy, public safety and children.

Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Barbara Lee
U.S. House of Representatives
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lee:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

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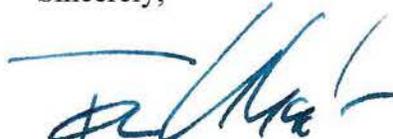
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Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable John Lewis
U.S. House of Representatives
343 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Lewis:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

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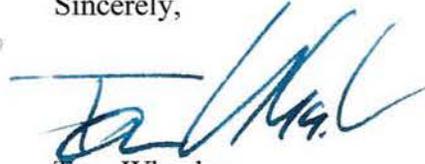
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Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks
U.S. House of Representatives
2234 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Meeks:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

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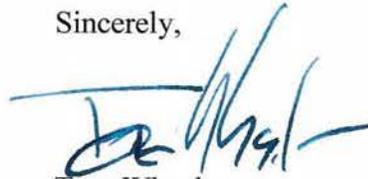
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Gwen Moore
U.S. House of Representatives
2245 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Moore:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

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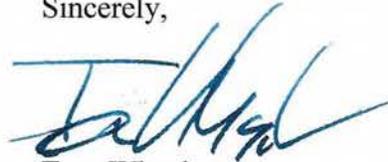
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
U.S. House of Representatives
2136 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Holmes Norton:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

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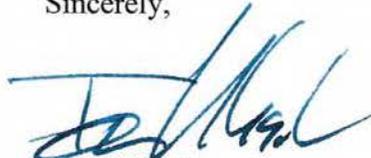
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Donald M. Payne
U.S. House of Representatives
103 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Payne:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

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Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 15, 2016

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rangel:

Thank you for your letter expressing your concern with issues relating to Section 629 of the Communications Act. Your views are very important and will be considered as part of the Commission's review.

I share your admiration for today's television landscape. There is an abundance of rich content and new technology. As you point out, technology is paving the way for software and apps to help consumers. Consumers deserve a variety of choices to view the programming they want, when they want and on the device they want. More choices often drive down consumer costs and drive up innovation.

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