

I am writing as a consumer who supports quality closed captioning during live and pre-recorded TV broadcasting.

Today, it is disheartening and frustrating to find programs on TV with no captions, to try and decipher poor quality or garbled captions, to have captions disappear minutes before the program ends, and to have captions block text information that is a part of the program.

There should be a standard complaint form for consumers to use to file complaints to their TV program distributor or provider about TV programs that have poor quality captions or that have no captions. Consumers must be able to find the correct contact information quickly and easily for TV program distributors and providers. The most logical place for this information and the complaint form is the FCC website because the FCC has oversight over all TV broadcasts in the United States. The FCC should require the TV program distributor or provider to respond to the consumer's complaint within 30 days after the complaint is received. The FCC should also establish fines/penalties for non-compliance with the captioning rules.

The FCC should establish compliance reporting requirements, filed by TV broadcasters along with compliance audits, to ensure continuing effective implementation of the captioning requirements and to hold broadcasters accountable for captioning. The FCC should require continuous monitoring of captioning by the TV broadcasters to ensure that technical problems are remedied promptly and efficiently. The FCC should require TV broadcasters to reformat edited or compressed captioning so the captioning can be transmitted accurately.

For a program to be considered "captioned," the FCC should require that the captioning meet minimum FCC captioning standards for completeness, accuracy, readability, and synchronicity with the audio portion of the program. The FCC should adopt non-technical quality standards to ensure that TV broadcasts are fully accessible to deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

I thank the FCC for beginning this very important and crucial proceeding on behalf of deaf and hard of hearing consumers. I am confident the FCC will consider these comments from the deaf and hard of hearing community and publish rules that will elevate closed captioning to a standard that is substantially equivalent to the audio portion of a TV program.

I appreciate this opportunity to provide my input as a TV viewer. Please support the original petition filed by the NAD, TDI, SHHH, DHHCAN, and ALDA.