

Dear Commission:

In the next couple of weeks you will be considering ruling on multicast must-carry rights for broadcasters in digital television.

May I please stress to you the absolute importance of granting broadcasters full cable carriage of their entire 6 MHz of spectrum.

The ruling requiring cable companies to carry the entire spectrum will make it possible for small and independent broadcasters to be able to expand their means of providing more local television to their individual communities. Must-carry is essential in preserving broadcast localism and promoting diversity of television programming. For example, it will allow our broadcast station more opportunities to carry local events and happenings that sometime require longer formats than our contractual agreement with our affiliate allows. Various local events such as high school playoff games, political debates, town meetings and more could be broadcast. Our station, WABG, is also considering utilizing multicast channels to carry an additional major network currently being imported to the market. This would allow even more local network choices for area viewers. Without the must carry ruling, it will be difficult to provide these special offerings to local viewers. Again, carriage of broadcaster's full range of digital channels will serve the public's interest in our local community and others across the nation.