



Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20554

December 11, 2006

06-181
CGB
FILED/ACCEPTED
JAN - 9 2007
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
Control No. 0602339-Pol

Mr. Alfred Sonnenstrahl
10910 Brewer House Road
Rockville, MD 20852-3463

Dear Mr. Sonnenstrahl:

Thank you for your letter to Senator Barbara A. Mikulski, concerning recent Commission actions granting certain exemptions from our closed captioning rules. Senator Mikulski forwarded your letter to the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) for our review and requested that the response be addressed directly to you. The Commission is committed to ensuring that the disability community has access to all telecommunications goods and services.

On September 11, 2006, the Commission's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau adopted an *Order* resolving two petitions for exemption from the closed captioning rules, CG Docket No. 06-181. Petitioners, New Beginning Ministries and Anglers for Christ Ministries, Inc. -- nonprofit organizations whose programming was produced by in-house volunteers with limited funding -- alleged that compliance would be an undue burden and would likely cause them to discontinue their programming.

The New Beginning and Anglers petitions were put on Public Notice, and an opposition was filed by a coalition of several deaf and hard-of-hearing advocacy groups. The Bureau considered the arguments of the opponents, but ruled in favor of the petitioners. Shortly thereafter, the Bureau issued a number of letter orders granting undue burden exemption petitions filed by other similarly situated video programming owners.

On October 12, 2006, several advocacy groups for the deaf and hard of hearing filed an application for Commission review of the Bureau *Order* and letter orders. The advocacy groups requested that all the petitions for relief from the closed captioning rules based on undue burden be placed on public notice. On November 7, 2006, the Commission released a Public Notice (PN) noting the application for review and seeking comments on all undue burden petitions not previously put on public notice. The PN states that the *Order* and letters orders granted by the Bureau will be held in abeyance until the comment cycle on the additional applications noticed is closed. The *Order* and letter orders will be reviewed by the Commission.

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List ABCDE

Mr. Alfred Sonnenstrahl

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We have placed a copy of your correspondence in the public record for this proceeding, CG Docket No. 06-181. We appreciate your inquiry. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Keithley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jay Keithley
Deputy Bureau Chief
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau

cc: Barbara A. Mikulski

BARBARA A. MIKULSKI
MARYLAND

SUITE 503
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2003

(202) 224-4654
TDD: (202) 224-5223

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2003

October 13, 2006

Ms. Diane Atkinson
Congressional Liason Specialist
Office of Legislative & Intergov't. Affairs
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W., Room 8C445
Washington, D.C. 20554-2101

CFB
Policy-Closed
CA/Howard
2339

Dear Ms. Atkinson:

I am writing to request your consideration of the attached correspondence from my constituents. Please respond directly to all ten constituents and send a copy to Alex Csicsek of my staff. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Csicsek at (202) 224-4654.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator

BAM:jac
Enclosure

SUITE 400
1629 THAMES STREET
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2006 OCT 23 09:00 AM

From: "webservd@www.senate.gov" <webservd@www.senate.gov>
Date: 9/23/2006 2:59:50 AM
To: webmail@mikulski-iq.senate.gov
Subject: www_email

<APP>SCCMail
<>Send</>
<PREFIX>Mr.</PREFIX>
<FIRST>Alfred</FIRST>
<LAST>Sonnenstrahl</LAST>
<ADDR1>10910 Brewer House Rd</ADDR1>
<ADDR2></ADDR2>
<CITY>Rockville</CITY>
<STATE>MD</STATE>
<ZIP>20852</ZIP>
<EMAIL>sonny@pobox.com</EMAIL>
<ISSUE>space</ISSUE>
<MSG>September 22, 2006
The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senate
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Senator Mikulski,

I protest the FCC's discriminatory decision by allowing almost 300 requests to reject people with hearing disabilities from being involved in the American community.

The FCC weakened the closed captioning rules while enhancing audios with unlimited expenses, and appeared to have created new standards and new rules for permitting programs to be televised without closed captions. The FCC is violating the federal laws.

Closed captioning is an essential part of any televised program. Closed captioning is an essential tool for people with hearing disabilities in education, entertainment, employment, and religion, to name a few. Captioning is extremely inexpensive, compared to the costs being spent for audio such as speakers, microphones, sound equipment and sound personnel, to name a few.

Please help the FCC to comply with the federal laws by reconsidering and reversing these absurd, insulting, degrading and discriminatory FCC decisions.

Sincerely,

Alfred Sonnenstrahl
10910 Brewer House Rd
Rockville, MD 20852-3463
</MSG>
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