



Telehealth Alliance of Oregon

June 8, 2007

Mr. Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 07-52

Dear Chairman Martin and Commissioners,

I am writing to you regarding your recent **Notice of Inquiry (NOI)** regarding broadband industry practices (**WC Docket No. 07-52**).

As I understand it, the FCC is seeking to improve its understanding of the nature of the market for broadband and related services. Specifically, we understand the areas that you are studying include: Whether content is favored or disfavored; how consumers are affected; if consumer choice of broadband providers is sufficient and if additional regulation is needed (i.e., non-discrimination).

I feel obligated to respond to your NOI as a health care professional who has been increasingly involved in telemedicine issues for a number of years. I am currently on the Executive Committee of the Telehealth Alliance of Oregon. As such, I have experienced first hand the incredible advances that have occurred in medicine and most importantly in the care of patients through the use of high-speed broadband networks and connectivity.

Particularly for patients and citizens living in rural settings, the advances in technology and networks have allowed care to be increasingly unburdened by time and distance. However, much additional work remains. As the FCC moves forward in making decisions that will affect millions of patients who are increasingly served (knowingly or not) by telemedicine utilization through high-speed networks, I would respectfully advocate that you consider several factors from my perspective as an industry professional.

Please, Do No Harm! As you know telemedicine needs sophisticated, reliable networks. These specialized networks will need private sector investment for higher capacity, increased network intelligence and providing enhanced security to perform telemedicine applications. We need the ability to protect patient privacy.

Our networks must be continuously enhanced to ensure sufficient bandwidth, security or capability for many real time telemedicine applications. I would respectfully urge the FCC to carefully ensure that it does not enact regulations that would stifle investment, innovation and network intelligence.

Telemedicine services are among the applications that need specialized and priority treatment. Frankly, intelligent networks should be able to distinguish between a life-saving telemedicine communications and a teenager's instant message. By any measure these two applications are simply not equal or comparable.

The FCC should not take any action that would discourage network providers, application providers and others from creative, innovative solutions that enable telemedicine services that precisely address the needs of our citizens and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine S. Britain". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catherine S. Britain