



June 14, 2007

Mr. Kevin Martin  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> 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 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 respond to your NOI as a health professional who has been increasingly involved in telemedicine issues over the past eight years. I am currently the Executive Director of the Association of Washington Public Hospital Districts (AWPHD). Over the past decade I have seen incredible advances in patient care driven by the connectivity offered through high-speed broadband networks.

Most of AWPHD's members operate in rural communities, where the advances in technology and network development have allowed far greater access to specialty care to our rural citizens. This is a significant contribution to efficiency and effectiveness. However, much additional work remains. As the FCC moves forward in making decisions that will affect millions of citizens who are served (knowingly or not) by high-speed networks, I would respectfully advocate that you consider several factors from my perspective as an industry professional.

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First, and I ask with all respect: Please! Do No Harm! Telemedicine demands sophisticated, reliable networks. These specialized networks will need private sector investment to increase capacity, develop network intelligence and provide enhanced security to protect patient privacy.

Networks must be continuously enhanced to ensure sufficient bandwidth, security and capability for many real time telemedicine applications. I would respectfully urge the FCC to guard against enacting regulations that would stifle investment, innovation and network intelligence.

Telemedicine services are among the emerging high-speed applications that deserve specialized, priority treatment. Intelligent networks will distinguish a life-saving telemedicine communication from a teenager's instant message. By any general measure, the two applications are simply not equal or comparable.

The FCC should take no action to discourage network developers, application providers or others from creative, innovative solutions that enable the telemedicine services so vital to the needs of our citizens and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Mero', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeff Mero, Executive Director  
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