

November 6, 2007

The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Room: 8-B201
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin,

After receiving numerous inquiries from my constituents, I respectfully request that the Federal Communications Commission assist in resolving the current dispute between cable operators and the NFL Network. It is my understanding the Federal Communications Commission could take up this issue in the coming weeks. It appears as if the only way this issue will be resolved for consumers and football fans is if an independent neutral arbitrator is appointed to bring the stakeholders together.

While it is not my desire to take sides in the dispute between the cable companies and the NFL Network, it is my desire to side with the football fans and consumers of Texas who have demonstrated a strong affinity for not only professional football, but also college football.

Nothing rates as high as Dallas Cowboys games in Texas as far as television programming is concerned. Unfortunately, millions of football fans across Texas are about to be deeply disappointed when they are forced to miss eight key NFL games that will be broadcasted on the NFL Network. Unless there is a resolution between the cable companies and the NFL Network in the near future, fans across the state will either have to miss Cowboys games against the Green Bay Packers and Carolina Panthers and a late-season game between the Houston Texans and Denver Broncos, or they will have to make a switch to a different video provider if one is available.

College fans will also miss the Insight and Texas Bowls which are also carried by the NFL Network. These two bowls have significant ties to the Big 12 Conference and Conference USA making it more than likely that one, or both, teams playing could hail from the Lonestar State. These games have provided Texas football fans with exciting outcomes in recent years. In fact, Texas Tech University staged the largest come from behind victory in college bowl history in last year's Insight Bowl.

For there to be true competitive access in cable programming, consumer demand must take precedence over corporate profits. I respectfully ask that you side with the fans and consumers on this issue and assign a neutral arbitrator to settle this dispute as soon as possible – and certainly before the first of such games are scheduled to be played at the end of this month. It is clear from the television ratings that an overwhelming number of viewers enjoy watching professional games. Unfortunately, the millions of consumers and fans involved in this dispute are being held hostage while the corporate interests fight with one another. Please help put an end to this stalemate by bringing the parties together.

While I understand that primary jurisdiction on cable issues resides with the Federal Government, by copy of this letter, I am also appealing to our own Public Utility Commission to make every effort to protect the consumer as it transitions from local cable franchises to our recently enacted state-wide franchise system. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this important consumer choice issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodie Laubenberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jodie Laubenberg
State Representative, District 89

cc: The Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein
Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
The Honorable Michael J. Copps
Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
The Honorable Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
The Honorable Deborah Taylor Tate
Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
The Honorable Paul Hudson
Chairman, Public Utility Commission of Texas
The Honorable Julie Caruthers Parsley
Commissioner, Public Utility Commission of Texas
The Honorable Barry T. Smitherman
Commissioner, Public Utility Commission of Texas