

State of Indiana



Senate

Senator Jeff Drozda
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Interim Study Committees 2007
Interim Study Committee on Education Matters
Annexation Study Committee, Chair
Environmental Crimes Task Force, Chair

Judiciary
Courts & Juvenile Justice, Chair
Pensions & Labor
Energy & Environmental Affairs
Education & Career Development

November 5, 2007

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

Re: **NFL Network and Other Independent Programmers**

Dear Chairman Martin:

My constituents are angry that they are not going to be able to watch their beloved Super Bowl Champion Indianapolis Colts on Thanksgiving or their Chicago Bears in December because cable companies refuse to carry NFL Network on basic cable. They already missed out on the Circle City Classic, a hugely popular football game between Historically Black Universities played in Indianapolis, and broadcast on NFL Network. Many of the constituent letters and emails I have received also note that cable systems require them to purchase other sports networks that they own – such as Versus and the Golf Channel – that they never watch.

I urge the FCC to consider changing its rules to facilitate appointment of an arbitrator in disputes like the one involving the NFL Network, so they can be resolved more quickly – preferably through negotiation between the parties – and with consumers' interests foremost in mind.

Cable provides a lot of really great programs for a diverse audience. My constituents and I are troubled by cable companies' continued discrimination against NFL Network and other high-quality independent channels like the Big Ten Network. This is not good for consumers as it will reduce media diversity and consumer choice.

If arbitration was available, it might help persuade the cable companies to negotiate a carriage deal with NFL Network before my constituents are deprived of the NFL Network game telecasts that begin this season on Thanksgiving night.

Thank you for reviewing these matters.

Sincerely,



Jeff Drozda
State Senator

Cc: Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

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