

Found this news story which has bearing on this proceeding, although neither Docket 07-52 or 08-7 is mentioned.

Writers push for laws to maintain Internet freedom

By JOHN DUNBAR – 11 hours ago

WASHINGTON (AP) — During the recent writers strike that virtually paralyzed television production for three months, Patric Verrone learned the value of the Internet.

It was his job as president of the Writers Guild of America, West, to keep his members unified during the highly public, 100-day strike, and the Internet proved invaluable.

"When your employers are the same companies that control the media, it's hard to get your message out," he told The Associated Press Monday.

To maintain contact with one another, guild members used blog postings, e-mail and videos. It was the success of that campaign that prompted Verrone to come to Washington and push for legislation that he hopes will guarantee the Internet's status as an open forum for communication.

Verrone was scheduled to appear Tuesday before the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee at a hearing entitled "The Future of the Internet."

Also scheduled were Federal Communications Commission Chairman Kevin Martin and actress and independent producer Justine Bateman, among others.

The issue of "network neutrality" — the principle that people should be able to go where they choose on the Internet without interference from network owners — has heated up again recently.

The FCC has conducted two hearings on "network management" following admissions by Comcast Corp. that it sometimes delayed file-sharing traffic for subscribers as a way to keep Web traffic flowing.

The writers strike, in addition to depending on the Internet for communication, was also largely prompted by the Internet. The writers guild fought successfully to be paid for content they create for use online as well as the reuse of previously created programs that appear on new platforms.

Large network owners like cable and telecommunications companies are opposed to network neutrality legislation, saying it would add a layer of regulation that will hurt consumers. They say it is

unnecessary and amounts to a solution in search of a problem.

Verrone, a television writer and producer for over 20 years, is supporting network neutrality legislation sponsored by Sens. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., and Olympia Snowe, R-Maine. Verrone wants Washington to ensure that the owners of the information pipelines in the U.S. do not interfere with the free exchange of ideas.

"The only thing bigger than corporations in this country is the government," he said. "So we think we have to make clear to legislators that we need somebody making sure that that pipe is neutral."

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