

With respect to transparency of CableCARDS in customer billing, the proposed change to make set-top box CableCARDS appear the same as other CableCARDS is a much needed and appreciated change. In the interim prior to the proposed AllVid solution taking effect I believe it is also necessary to devote attention in the rulemaking to programming offered by MVPDs that is only available over leased set-top boxes. Namely, video-on-demand content. Many CableCARD leasers currently receive free VOD content as part of their monthly cable subscriptions, either as a standard package or as part of an HBO or Showtime premium channel subscription. However, they are unable to access this content unless they also lease a cable box from the MVPD which has the necessary two-way communication abilities. Nonetheless, these users are still being billed by the MVPD for theoretical access, as MVPDs do not separate VOD content billing, unless it is a pay-per-view item. For example, Verizon makes freely available on its FiOS VOD service episodes of the Showtime series "The Tudors" for all Showtime subscribers. The user is not billed at the time he chooses to watch a particular episode over VOD, only at the end of the month as a part of the Showtime subscription. A CableCARD user is billed the same amount, but he or she is unable to access said content. The costs of free VOD should be made clear to subscribers, and they should be able to decline access to the VOD content in exchange for a lower monthly rate, at least until such time as a workable two-way access solution, such as AllVid, is in place.