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June 16, 2010

Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: CG Docket No. 10-51

I am writing to you to express concern at your impending decision regarding Video Relay Service (VRS) Centres that are based in Canada, servicing Deaf Americans.

As a Deaf Canadian, the future of VRS is a very important issue to myself and my family. I have made many calls Canada to Canada using a VRS in the past. I started making these calls when I bought my VPad from Viable about one and a half years ago. I was able to use Viable VRS often to make calls such as making doctors appointments, calling friends, calling stores everything that a Hearing Canadian would have been able to do. Although most of my calls had been through Viable, I have also used Hands On Video Relay Service (HOVRS). I personally know that many of my friends have made calls using these VRS companies and I am sure that thousands of these calls have been made over the past few years. Please note that these calls were placed through American VRS companies with American Interpreters.

A few months ago I noticed that I was unable to make any more VRS calls when the interpreters informed me that they could not complete my calls because my Video Phone was not registered. I was very disappointed, but I am very happy at the news that a Canadian pilot project will soon be starting to service Canadians making calls within Canada.

We are striving to have the same rights as our proud American neighbours when it comes to being able to communicate in our first language, American Sign Language (ASL), when making telephone calls. I am sure you are not trying to imply that our Canadian Interpreters are more likely to commit acts of fraud than their American counterparts. I urge you to re-consider any decision that you may have made to close any VRS centers in Canada. Your decision will greatly affect the future of Video Relay Services available to Canadians and possibly all North Americans, presently and in the future.

Regards,

Darlene Clifton