Shirl Storm

From: Julie VonOntjes [juliesigns@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 06, 2010 11:49 AM
To: Julius Genachowski; Michael Copps; Robert McDowell; Mignon Clyburn; Meredith Baker
Subject: VRS Rate Changes

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

FILED/ACCEPTED
JUN 0 8 2010
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Re: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn, and Baker,

As an employee of a Video Relay Service (VRS) provider, I have the great fortune of assisting deaf individuals to communicate by videophone in American Sign Language using VRS. I have seen first-hand that this life-altering broadband service is a vital link that connects deaf people to the hearing community.

Ensuring that deaf individuals have access to VRS and encouraging improvements in VRS should be a high priority for you as Chairman and Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires the FCC to make available to all deaf individuals nationwide "functionally-equivalent" communications.

You will soon determine the future of VRS. When you set the VRS rate, you will determine whether America makes progress toward the statutory goals of functional equivalence, nationwide access and inclusion – or force deaf users to revert to TTY communications. And, you will determine whether VRS fulfills its potential to drive broadband adoption by the deaf, even in the face of poverty and isolation.

I was deeply disturbed to see the Commission's recent Public Notice on VRS rates. These proposals would put an end to VRS as we know it. My employer has already informed me that if these proposed rates are adopted, our company would head into bankruptcy. This would be disastrous for deaf VRS users.

The FCC should be increasing the availability and use of VRS, not cutting back. You should adopt a rate that encourages continuing improvements in VRS technology and continues to improve services levels. Recent developments in VRS are a good example of how the service can be improved, such as enhanced 911 services, 10-digit numbering, a larger and better-trained pool of interpreters and better videophones with an array of enhanced features. Monthly payments for broadband are a big expense for many deaf people, and instead of trying to cut back on VRS, you should be exploring ways to make VRS over broadband more affordable to deaf

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individuals.

Progress towards functional equivalence will be destroyed if the FCC does not encourage VRS providers to improve VRS and make it more widely available. VRS is a recent and dramatic advancement that benefits those who are deaf, but so much more can be done. It would be tragic if the FCC were to destroy this broadband service that is so vital to the deaf.

Recent reports of fraud in the VRS industry are disturbing to employees who work for a company that has operated within current FCC guidelines and has worked to maintain the integrity of the VRS fund. The FCC must devote more of its time and energy to focusing on the elimination of fraud.

I urge you to establish a fair and predictable rate for VRS that will encourage VRS providers to invest in improving VRS and reaching more deaf individuals. The law requires it and it is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Julie VonOntjes
816-210-4818

Shirl Storm

From: Philippe Montalette [pmontalette@mac.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 06, 2010 10:16 AM
To: Julius Genachowski
Subject: Comments to the Chairman

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JUN 08 2010

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Philippe Montalette (pmontalette@mac.com) writes:

Re: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

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Sincerely,
Philippe Montalette

Server protocol: HTTP/1.1
Remote host: 209.169.244.29
Remote IP address: 209.169.244.29

Shirl Storm

From: cpanderson22@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 06, 2010 5:54 PM
To: Julius Genachowski
Subject: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

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JUN 08 2010
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

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

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I urge you to establish a fair and predictable rate for VRS that will encourage VRS providers to invest in improving VRS and reaching more deaf individuals. The law requires it and it is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,
Peggy Anderson
2540 Renfew Way
Lansing, MI 48911

Shirl Storm

From: Susan Soric [ssoric@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, May 07, 2010 11:37 AM
To: Julius Genachowski
Subject: Comments to the Chairman

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JUN 0 8 2010

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Susan Soric (ssoric@gmail.com) writes:

Re: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I have heard about the rate cuts that you have proposed on Sorenson Communications. The rate cut is unfair and would cause Sorenson to go bankrupt. This would put many thousands of people out of work and many thousands of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people without their connection to the Hearing World.

The other companies would not be able to sustain the influx in customers and thus would not be reimbursed for services. This would be the end of Video Relay Services as we know it today.

I urge you to establish a fair and predictable rate for Video Relay Service that will encourage VRS providers to invest in improving VRS and reaching more deaf individuals. The law requires it and it is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Susan Soric

Server protocol: HTTP/1.1
Remote host: 128.135.45.11
Remote IP address: 128.135.45.11

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Shirl Storm

From: Steve Farmer [farmer3222@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, May 07, 2010 1:13 PM
To: Julius Genachowski
Subject: Comments to the Chairman

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JUN 08 2010

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Steve Farmer (farmer3222@comcast.net) writes:

Re: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn, and Baker,

With the proposed rate decrease from the FCC and NECA, it is imperative that our voices be heard. This new rate would mean the end of communication for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing as we know it and put them back into using limited forms of communication; such as, a TTY.

With the proposed rate plans, the larger companies are basically being punished for developing new technology to advance the lives of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing population in a way that benefits the access of communication within our society. The small companies would remain small as there is no incentive to grow, diversify, and develop new and more efficient technology. The small companies do not have the capacity to serve the population that is being served today. The medium and large companies would be extremely limited assuming they would be able to keep their doors open and the development of new technology would be an afterthought.

The United States has always been the land of opportunity and your proposal would drastically limit a large portion of the population to whom the opportunity was there, but then abruptly taken away. The goal of the Americans with Disabilities Act was to provide functional equivalency for all Americans and this decision would demolish that equivalency.

Please continue to fund VRS at the current 2007-2010 rates. To fail to do so will only serve as a serious injustice to the Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing Community.

Sincerely,

Steve Farmer

Steve Farmer

cc: Honorable Lamar Alexander, Senator of Tennessee
Honorable Bob Corker, Senator of Tennessee
Honorable John J. Duncan, Congressman of Tennessee

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Server protocol: HTTP/1.1
Remote host: 66.4.204.206
Remote IP address: 66.4.204.206

Shirl Storm

From: Nicholas Romano [nr206n@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, May 07, 2010 9:08 AM
To: Julius Genachowski; Michael Copps; Robert McDowell; Mignon Clyburn; MeredithAttwell.Baker@fcc.gov
Subject: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

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

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Federal Communications Commission
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Sincerely,

Nicholas Romano

VRS Trainer

New England Region - R4

Sorenson Communications

www.sorensonvrs.com