

RICK BOUCHER  
9TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

May 20, 2010

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The Honorable Julius Genachowski  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I write regarding the Commission's April 30, 2010, Public Notice regarding annual payment formulas and funding requirement estimates for the Interstate TRS Fund for the 2010-2011 Fund year.

Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act requires the Commission to ensure that telecommunications carriers offer telephone services to individuals with hearing or speech disabilities that allow them to communicate with individuals without hearing impairments. This requirement has been interpreted to include intrastate and interstate video relay service (VRS).

As the Commission proceeds with its Public Notice addressing rates for the 2010-2011 Fund year, I urge you to ensure that VRS rates account for the actual costs of providing the service, such as costs of customer equipment and installation, so that VRS providers may continue to offer this valuable service. As always, the Commission should also ensure continued oversight of the VRS program.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Rick Boucher  
Member of Congress

*Handwritten notes:*  
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ADA TRS  
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

August 5, 2010

The Honorable Rick Boucher  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2187 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Boucher:

Thank you for your letter regarding the reimbursement rate for Video Relay Service (VRS). I share your support for VRS, which has become a critical communications tool for many who are deaf or hard of hearing.

On June 28, 2010, the Commission unanimously adopted two items to address immediate and long-term approaches for sustaining the vital Telecommunications Relay Services, of which VRS is one form. In an *Order*, the Commission sets interim VRS rates for the July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011 period at \$6.2390 for Tier I, \$6.2335 for Tier II, and \$5.0668 for Tier III. These rates represent the average of the current tiered rates and NECA's proposed rates based on actual, historical costs. The *Order* notes that these rates also reflect a balance between the goal of ensuring that VRS providers recover from the VRS Fund only the reasonable costs caused by their provision of VRS and the goal of ensuring quality and sufficient service during a one-year period.

The other item adopted on June 28 is a *Notice of Inquiry* to take a fresh look at the VRS rules with an eye to ensuring that this vital program remains effective, efficient, and sustainable in the future. The *Notice* poses questions that delve into many cost and reimbursement related issues, seeking to make the program less susceptible to the waste, fraud, and abuse that have plagued the current program. Bringing clarity and predictability to VRS compensation is high on the Commission's list of priorities, and we will resolve this proceeding as expeditiously as possible. I am enclosing a copy of the Commission's News Release for your information.

I appreciate your continuing interest in this very important matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. Genachowski", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Julius Genachowski