



September 29, 2010

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**Ex Parte**

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Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**RE: Implementation of Section 304 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996; Commercial Availability of Navigation Devices; Compatibility Between Cable Systems and Consumer Electronics Equipment, CS Docket No. 97-80, PP Docket No. 00-67**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On September 28, 2010, David Young, Will Johnson and I met separately with Rosemary Harold, Legal Advisor to Commissioner McDowell, and Joshua Cinelli, Legal Advisor to Commissioner Copps, to discuss our position in the CableCARD proceeding.

We cautioned the Commission against requiring video providers to include separate line items on subscriber bills for CableCARDS included as part of leased set-top boxes. Doing so would cause confusion for the vast majority of subscribers who lease their boxes from the video provider, many of whom may not know or care that their leased box may (or may not) contain a CableCARD. Many of these customers would likely be confused and upset to see a new CableCARD fee on their bills, when they are receiving no additional equipment or functionality compared to what they receive today.

We also urged the FCC to give video providers flexibility in handling customer requests for CableCARD installations rather than imposing a requirement of self-installation. We emphasized that development of new systems and support to accommodate self-install would take considerable time and resources, unjustified given the limited number of FiOS TV consumers using CableCARDS today. Also, we noted that Verizon currently performs installations free of charge for our customers, and that these installations can be complex, even for trained technicians. Should the FCC, nevertheless, impose a self-installation requirement, we suggested a one-year phase-in period for implementation of the new rule to allow sufficient time for development and deployment of operations support systems programming changes necessary to support the requirement.

We discussed the Commission's proposals related to the accommodation of switched digital video (SDV). We noted that Verizon does not employ SDV, but expressed concern with extending the outdated CableCARD regime to reach new technologies, including SDV. Any new requirements to address SDV should be narrowly tailored, and should not extend to new technologies not supported by CableCARDS.

Ms. Marlene. H. Dortch

September 29, 2010

Page 2

Finally, we encouraged the Commission to eliminate the current – expensive and largely unused – 1394 interface. Standards for home networking – mostly based on IP interfaces – are accomplishing the goals of Section 629, without the drawbacks of technological mandates. Similarly, the elimination of the 1394 interface should not be contingent on alternative interfaces' supporting bi-directional capabilities for remote control devices. As NCTA's recent ex parte indicated, such standards are not yet in place, although they are now being developed in response to consumer demand. There is no reason to force consumers to continue to carry unnecessary costs associated with the 1394 interface while those standards are being developed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marlene H. Dortch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line at the end.

cc: Rosemary Harold  
Joshua Cinelli  
Bill Lake