

My name is Barbara A. Hansen and I am contacting you regarding docket number, CG Docket No. 10-145, concerning use of cellular phones in light of my severe vision loss. I want to thank the Federal Communication Commission for providing this opportunity for people with disabilities to share concerns regarding this problem.

I have been legally blind since birth, seeing light and shadows. I attended a residential school for the blind, learned Braille and graduated from college with a BA degree in Social Work. My work career involved serving as a social Worker with the NC Division of Services for the Blind. I am now retired and am involved with a small radio reading service program in eastern North Carolina. Several years ago, with the assistance of audio instructions on tape and a screen reader, I learned to use a computer. For the most part, I can usually figure out equipment such as tape recorders, and radio/CD stereos etc. This has not been the case in the use of the cellular phones. I can basically turn the phone on, place a call and send it. I can somewhat retrieve messages, delete and save them. These are the only features that I am able to utilize on a cellular phone. I currently have my cellular phone service through US Cellular and I specifically ask them for a phone with features that would be accessible to someone with severe vision loss. I was willing to pay the extra money in order to get this kind of phone. I thought I understood them to say that they had such a phone, however; the phone I received only had speech for announcing if I have a message and the options for saving, deleting and how to get to other menu options. When I try to go to these options such as "your phone list", I cannot figure out how to create this list. From what I am told by sighted friends, there are other menus which I cannot access. I realize that for around \$1000 I can get software to go with certain phones that is suppose to allow you to use a cellular phone with less difficulty, however; for years, I have spent many hundreds of dollars in trying to keep up with the speech software for my computer and just simply cannot afford to pay all this extra money to have access to all the features on cellular phones. For the most part, the equipment that we as blind individuals use such as an accessible digital player to read books, record music etc. is twice as much as the I-pods that sighted people use. This is true for most of the equipment that we use to carry out our daily lives.

My concern about the cellular service that I receive is that I am paying for features like text messaging, that I cannot use. These features are usually included in the service plan.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share these concerns.

Best regards,

Barbara Hansen