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From the Desk of Andrew D. Gillum
City Commission, Seat 2



October 20, 2010

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

Received & Inspected
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FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As a young elected official, I am in a position to help shape American policies right now and for times to come. There are many issues before us, and our citizens in Tallahassee and across America are struggling from paycheck to paycheck, losing jobs, losing homes, losing hope. I want to ensure that the things we have control over and that can help our citizens today, are addressed and resolved.

I am speaking about the current issue regarding retransmission consent disputes between broadcasters and multichannel video programming distributors, (MVPDs), and the fact that channels have been cut off and millions of consumers are caught in the middle of negotiations that may linger for some time. This is unacceptable and it is time for the FCC to settle these lingering disputes. How many more times are Americans, who pay their cable bills each month, going to have to see a black screen just because companies cannot come to a final agreement?

The ability to shut down an entire nation's, or even a city's, television signal is very scary. The information that could get lost during this possible blackout is unimaginable and could leave us in a dangerous position. Not only are we left vulnerable, but shows that comfort us and events that keep us entertained, such as the upcoming World Series, Monday Night Football games, and even regular popular weekly shows, can be and are currently cut off to millions.

The FCC needs to ensure television signals cannot be broken, no matter what negotiations are occurring. Consumers should not have to suffer the consequences of companies unable to get it together and agree on negotiation terms. The FCC should insist that consumers should not be affected and used as a negotiation tool. Again, I am urging binding arbitration as part of the reform efforts of the old and insufficient retransmission consent rules and asking that the FCC step in, settle the dispute, and insist that broadcasters turn the channel on and keep it on during these and any other future negotiations.

Sincerely,

Respectfully,

Andrew D. Gillum
City Commission, Seat 2

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