Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

	)	
In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Public Notice Seeking Comment on the Interpretation	)	
of the Terms "Multichannel Video Programming	)	MB Docket No. 12-83
Distributor" and "Channel" as Raised in Pending	)	
Program Access Complaint Proceeding	)	
	)	

COMMENTS OF THE PARENTS TELEVISION COUNCIL

The Parents Television Council, representing more than 1.3 million Americans dedicated to protecting children from sex, violence and profanity in entertainment, hereby submits the following reply comments in the above proceeding.

While this proceeding has garnered the attention of many within the video programming industry, the Parents Television Council seeks to present a consumer and family perspective on the key issues presented by it. The media marketplace is dynamic, and the Commission is wise in this case to seek public comment on how best to regulate it to ensure consumer protection, diversity and competition.

On the other hand, what has been clear and unchanging is the fact that consumers and families want more and better choices in multichannel programming and by wide margins continue to believe that there is too much sex, violence and coarse language on television.[1] Since all major MVPDs sell essentially similar packages of channels at roughly the same price points due to the wholesale bundling of networks by

[1] Zogby Poll, March 3, 2007

the program-owning media companies, there is very little ability for consumers to “vote with their wallets” and make a market-based decision about what television programming they want to pay for and bring into the home. In other words, millions of consumers are faced with an “everything or nothing” proposition in the video programming marketplace.

The great promise of so-called over the top (internet-delivered) video programming is the empowerment of the consumer to bring precisely the programming that is desired into the home at precisely the time it is wanted and to be freed from the traditional bundling model of programming.

However, this promising new world of consumer-centric, free market decision making is being held hostage by the current business model which is unnecessarily being propped up by outdated regulation. Other commenters, particularly Sky Angel and Public Knowledge, have done an excellent service to the Commission in documenting exactly why this situation has developed, so there is little need to rehash those arguments here.

Consequently, we agree with other commenters that Sky Angel and other similar services must be reclassified as a multichannel video program distributor (“MVPD”). Such a finding fits squarely with the pro-competition, pro-consumer goals enacting by the MVPD definition as part of the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, and would give such services a fair footing on which to compete for customers and viewership. Such an increase in competition leads to greater investment in new technologies, new methods of delivery and spurs

development of new programming choices. That will inexorably lead to increased consumer choice at lower prices.

It is that goal which is clearly in the public interest, and must be central to the Commission's decision making process in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Isett
Director of Public Policy