

Chairman Genachowski,

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

November 13, 2012

Dear Chairman Julius Genachowski,

My name is Paul Spann and I have been deaf since birth. Prior to having Video Relay Services, I relied on a teletype (TTY) machine to communicate with other deaf and hearing people. The TTY was used to communicate with a hearing person through a relay service. Please note that the hearing person could only hear the interpreter's voice that may or may not convey the tone or expression of my voice. In live conversations between two hearing persons they are able to hear the pitch, tone or other expressive means during their communication. As deaf individuals, in order to receive the same level of communications with deaf and hearing people we depend on the Video Relay Services (VRS) where we can actually see the person we are speaking to if they are deaf and the interpreter if we (deaf people) are communicating with a hearing person. With the use of TTY, my personal advancement in my job was limited because I was unable to speak with hearing people if they did not have a TTY. I used the relay services at that time (1980's to 2006) but the hearing people were not patient enough to live with the delayed communication. 85% of the time if I called the same person again, they would not answer if they knew I was calling.

All of this changed when I started receiving VRS in 2006. It opened a whole new world for me in communicating with anyone at anytime. VRS gives me a sense of confidence in communicating freely where I am getting 99% of the spoken word from hearing or deaf people. The barriers were broken down and I was able to start a new job without any communication barriers. Employers are willing to pay for the Video Phone for a nominal fee in place of interpreters. All of my meetings are now interpreted through VRS. This has allowed me to respond and participate in the meetings. Also, allowed me to communicate more effectively with my family and friends.

The current FCC proposal will drastically change my ability to have the freedom of choice in selecting an efficient Video Relay Service at the same exceptional level of service that I have come to expect. America was built on the Bill of Rights. The FCC should not be telling us which products to buy or which service we can or cannot use.

Do you really want the Government to control everything as some people have alluded to" I doubt it. You want the same freedom as all people in America. We as Deaf Americans should continue to have the freedom of choice in selecting the best Video Relay service available in the same vein that the Americans have in choosing the best cable company from their perspective.

The current proposals of the FCC want to put all Deaf People in a National Database and deciding which VRS provider they will use, limiting their choices of equipment, forcing them to purchase off-the-shelf equipment not suited to transmit the sophisticated video compression technology they currently enjoy, is liken to loading all Deaf people up in box cars on a train bound for ?nowhere.? Or better yet, forcing every telephone user in the United States into a National Database and dictating

which telephone company they will use, AT&T, Sprint, or T-Mobile, etc.

While that may sound ridiculous that is exactly what the FCC is proposing for Deaf and Hard of Hearing American citizens. CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

Please take a few minutes to investigate what the FCC is proposing ? in YOUR name, listen to all sides, most especially your Deaf constituents? and Interpreters. Please stop them from sending a significant portion of the American citizens you support back 50 years and denying them the basic right of quality communication.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this IMPORTANT matter that is intruding on the Bill of Rights of Deaf Americans.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Spann, Sr. Paul Spann