Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Room TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

Received & Inspected

DEC 03 2012

FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am writing to provide my comments on Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Public Notice on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

I am deaf and VRS is how I stay in touch with my family and friends who are not deaf. I'm sure that hearing people don't think about what it means to be able to pick up the phone and call anyone any time or anywhere they want. But for me, this means everything. VRS has changed my life.

I am alarmed that the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

Second, I don't want to have to buy and set up my own VRS equipment. I got my equipment at no cost from my VRS provider. They installed it and continue to maintain it. It would be unfair to now shift this burden to me and other deaf people. If the government wants to prevent deaf people from connecting with others and using VRS, this is a good way to do it.

The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

Sincerely,

Name Lynn Campbell

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1235 Pinnacle Dr., Columbus, OH 43204

Telephone Number 614-256-6606

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I am [redacted] deaf, but I know firsthand how VRS works. VRS allows people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to use the "phone" to communicate comfortably and easily just like people who can hear. In this way, it has changed the lives of so many people who are deaf. With VRS they can do the things we take for granted – make a doctor's appointment, call a child's school, or simply order a pizza. VRS puts people who are deaf on a more level playing field.

The changes being considered by the FCC would undo much of this progress. VRS largely relies on highly skilled American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. These are the people who relay the conversation between the deaf and the hearing participants. The FCC wants to drastically cut the rate they pay VRS companies for providing this service. Obviously, this will have an immediate and negative effect on the ability of VRS companies to employ and train qualified interpreters.

The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government-mandated software that is used on off-the-shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, the iPad, or a smart TV. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies provided by VRS providers. These have been specifically designed to take into account the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Sandra Cravens

Title, if appropriate

Address 2171 Logan Lane West Union, OH 45693

Telephone Number 544-7133 - home
544-8110 - TTD

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Sincerely,

Name Willie E Cravens

Title, if appropriate

Address 2171 Logans Lane West Union, OK 45693

Telephone Number 544-7133

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Sincerely,

Name Jeremy Lutella

Title, if appropriate

Address 2582 Yates Ave, Grove City, OH 43123

Telephone Number (614) 517-0241

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Sincerely,

Name Maureen Campbell

Title, if appropriate

Address 1238 Pinnacle Dr. Columbus, OH 43204

Telephone Number 614-286-6606

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I am a deaf person who uses Video Relay Services (VRS) for my communication with hearing people. VRS is a communication tool I use every day.

I am writing because I am very concerned about the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC's) recent proposals to change the way VRS works. I can't imagine life without the current services I use. I don't want to see those services change!

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) moved deaf people forward and opened up opportunities for us. The ADA assured deaf people (like me) that we will have access to "functionally-equivalent" communication – communication choices and services similar to those enjoyed by hearing people. To date, Video Relay Service (VRS) is the most functionally-equivalent communication service for deaf people.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect, I won't have what the ADA promised me – choice in my VRS equipment. I want to keep options available in choosing products that were designed for deaf people. I want choices.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect, I won't have a choice in my VRS provider. I don't want my calls to be routed through a centralized database that would assign my calls to different providers. Hearing people have a choice in service providers. I want a choice.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect and there are rate cuts for VRS providers, the quality of my service will suffer. I'm concerned that with very limited resources, VRS providers might have to make changes that would result in longer hold times and unreliable service. Hearing people have a choice to choose quality service. I don't want VRS quality to suffer because VRS providers have no choice but to cut aspects of their service.

Please fulfill the promises of the ADA! I want functional equivalency. I want choices – in equipment, providers and quality. Please ensure that the VRS services I currently enjoy are maintained.

Sincerely, Carole L. Finan
Name: CAROLE L. FINAN
Title: Retired
Address: 7901 Hope Valley Ct., Adamstown, MD 21710
Telephone Number: 301-363-4830

By signing this document, you are filing an official FCC proceeding. All information submitted, including names and addresses, will be publicly available via the web.

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Sincerely,
Name: Robert A. Walker
Title:
Address: P.O. Box 466 Braddock Heights, MD 21714
Telephone Number: 240 513 2098

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Sincerely,

Name Janet Haubein

Title, if appropriate

Address 4018 Elkton St

Telephone Number 614-497-3355

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Sincerely,

Name Kenneth Lee Tyffond

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 4024 ELKTON ST. COLUMBUS, OHIO 43207

Telephone Number 614-491-8274

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Sincerely,

Name Kim Zweydorff

Title, if appropriate

Address 11075 Cedar Creek Dr.

Telephone Number 834-8361

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Sincerely,

Name [illegible]

Title, if appropriate_____

Address 1005 Robmeyer Dr. Col Oh 43207

Telephone Number 614 492-8516

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Sincerely,

Name Connie Abele

Title, if appropriate

Address 232 N. Sycamore St.

Telephone Number 513-316-3995

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Cutting the rates paid to VRS providers as low as the FCC proposes will only reduce service quality I currently depend on. How will these companies hire and keep skilled ASL interpreters on staff when the government has just cut what they are willing to pay them by $2 an hour? How will 911 calls be answered immediately when there are fewer interpreters and longer hold times? How will I know that my VRS will work when I'm using a videophone from WalMart instead of the specially designed videophone from my VRS provider?

I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

Sincerely,

Name Penny Bowling

Title, if appropriate

Address ~~5670~~ 5260 County Rd 25 A
Lardington Ohio 43315

Telephone Number 567-231-433
up

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The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

Sincerely,

Name Scott ALTKINSON

Title, if appropriate

Address 5260 County Rd 25 #
Carlington OH 43315

Telephone Number 567-219-1709
VP-TEXT

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Name Scott ALTKINSON

Title, if appropriate

Address 5260 COUNTY RD 25 #
CARDINGTON OHIO 43315

Telephone Number ~~567-231-1397~~
VP 567-219-1709
TEXT

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CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned that the changes being considered by the FCC will destroy a program that is vitally important to people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

I am not deaf, but I know firsthand how VRS works. VRS allows people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to use the "phone" to communicate comfortably and easily just like people who can hear. In this way, it has changed the lives of so many people who are deaf. With VRS they can do the things we take for granted – make a doctor's appointment, call a child's school, or simply order a pizza. VRS puts people who are deaf on a more level playing field.

The changes being considered by the FCC would undo much of this progress. VRS largely relies on highly skilled American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. These are the people who relay the conversation between the deaf and the hearing participants. The FCC wants to drastically cut the rate they pay VRS companies for providing this service. Obviously, this will have an immediate and negative effect on the ability of VRS companies to employ and train qualified interpreters.

The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government-mandated software that is used on off-the-shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, the iPad, or a smart TV. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies provided by VRS providers. These have been specifically designed to take into account the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Melinda Wilson

Title, if appropriate Interpreter

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Telephone Number

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Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
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Washington, DC 20554

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Sincerely,

Name Sal Adams

Title, if appropriate Service Coordinator

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Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
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I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am opposed to the changes being considered.

VRS has created a more level playing field for people like me who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, empowering us to communicate via videophone with anyone at any time in our native language, American Sign Language. The nature of the work I do requires that I be able to use the phone to communicate with colleagues, clients and business associates regardless of whether they are hearing or deaf. Without reliable, high-quality VRS service I would not be able to do my job effectively.

The changes the FCC is considering would drastically change the nature of the VRS I depend on. One of the aspects of VRS that makes it such an effective way to communicate is the quality of the videophone technology used and the fact that the products provided by VRS companies have been developed specifically with the needs of the deaf – my needs – in mind. Yet, the FCC is considering changes that would, instead, force us to use off-the-shelf products and government-mandated software. Using products developed by and for people who are hearing would be a huge step backwards! The FCC cannot consider this to be a reasonable replacement for the high quality, specialized VRS technology we use every day.

The rate changes being considered by the FCC would also directly affect my ability to access VRS, as well as the reliability and quality of service I depend on. If the FCC slashes the rates paid to VRS providers, as suggested in its Public Notice, many companies will simply stop providing this essential service. This will put me and all members of the deaf community at a significant disadvantage.

In my view, VRS today is a shining example of what Congress intended when it passed the Americans with Disabilities Act 22 years ago. It is absolutely essential that any changes to the current program maintain the access, innovation and reliability that define VRS today.

Sincerely,

Name James Perry

Title, if appropriate VP 200

Address 24 Sandra Ct. Walnut Creek, Ca 94595

Telephone Number (925) 705-4511

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I am writing to provide my comments on Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Public Notice on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

I am deaf and VRS is how I stay in touch with my family and friends who are not deaf. I'm sure that hearing people don't think about what it means to be able to pick up the phone and call anyone any time or anywhere they want. But for me, this means everything. VRS has changed my life.

I am alarmed that the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

Second, I don't want to have to buy and set up my own VRS equipment. I got my equipment at no cost from my VRS provider. They installed it and continue to maintain it. It would be unfair to now shift this burden to me and other deaf people. If the government wants to prevent deaf people from connecting with others and using VRS, this is a good way to do it.

The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

Sincerely,

Name James Perry

Title, if appropriate VP 200

Address 24 Sandra Ct. Walnut Creek, Ca. 94595

Telephone Number (925) 705-4511

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I am not deaf, but I know firsthand how VRS works. VRS allows people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to use the "phone" to communicate comfortably and easily just like people who can hear. In this way, it has changed the lives of so many people who are deaf. With VRS they can do the things we take for granted – make a doctor's appointment, call a child's school, or simply order a pizza. VRS puts people who are deaf on a more level playing field.

The changes being considered by the FCC would undo much of this progress. VRS largely relies on highly skilled American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. These are the people who relay the conversation between the deaf and the hearing participants. The FCC wants to drastically cut the rate they pay VRS companies for providing this service. Obviously, this will have an immediate and negative effect on the ability of VRS companies to employ and train qualified interpreters.

The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government-mandated software that is used on off-the-shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, the iPad, or a smart TV. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies provided by VRS providers. These have been specifically designed to take into account the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name [illegible]

Title, if appropriate Interpreter

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If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name HENRY L. NEAL JR

Title, if appropriate

Address 1326 BROOKcliff Ave

Telephone Number 614-556-4748VP

DR MELISA RIZER
number call - 614-293-2700

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I am deaf and VRS is how I stay in touch with my family and friends who are not deaf. I'm sure that hearing people don't think about what it means to be able to pick up the phone and call anyone any time or anywhere they want. But for me, this means everything. VRS has changed my life.

I am alarmed that the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

Second, I don't want to have to buy and set up my own VRS equipment. I got my equipment at no cost from my VRS provider. They installed it and continue to maintain it. It would be unfair to now shift this burden to me and other deaf people. If the government wants to prevent deaf people from connecting with others and using VRS, this is a good way to do it.

The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

Sincerely,

Name MARIA LUISA BIGGINS

Title, if appropriate

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MEDLEY FLA 33166
Telephone Number 786-350 2243

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I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC's) request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned about these proposals and how they will affect my family's safety.

VRS is a lifeline. It allows me to conduct business, connect with my family and friends and do many other things over the phone that many hearing people take for granted. Most important, though, VRS is how I access my local emergency 911 service. In an emergency I know that when I place a 911 call it will be answered immediately. My location will be known. And, specially trained American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters will be there to make sure my local emergency responders know exactly what help I need. You can't imagine how frightening it is to think that I might not be able to get help for me or my family because of long hold times, poorly trained interpreters, or bad equipment.

Cutting the rates paid to VRS providers as low as the FCC proposes will only reduce service quality I currently depend on. How will these companies hire and keep skilled ASL interpreters on staff when the government has just cut what they are willing to pay them by $2 an hour? How will 911 calls be answered immediately when there are fewer interpreters and longer hold times? How will I know that my VRS will work when I'm using a videophone from WalMart instead of the specially designed videophone from my VRS provider?

I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

Sincerely,

Name ADA Fields

Title, if appropriate

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FCC Mail Room

November 19, 2012

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street SW
Room TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

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I am not deaf, but I know firsthand how VRS works. VRS allows deaf or hard-of-hearing people to use the "phone" to communicate comfortably and easily just like people who can hear. In this way, it has changed the lives of so many people who are deaf, especially those who are not comfortable with the written word. With VRS they can do the things we take for granted – make a doctor's appointment, call a child's school, or simply order a pizza. VRS puts people who are deaf on a more level playing field.

The changes being considered by the FCC would undo much of this progress. VRS largely relies on highly skilled American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. These are the people who relay the conversation between the deaf and the hearing participants. The FCC wants to drastically cut the rate they pay VRS companies for providing this service. Obviously, this will have an immediate and negative effect on the ability of VRS companies to employ and train qualified interpreters. It will also likely have a sobering effect on students and employees willing to learn ASL.

The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government-mandated software that is used on off-the-shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, the iPad, or a smart TV. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies provided by the VRS providers. These have been specifically designed to take into account the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely, Kay M Lovness

Name Kay M Lovness

Title, if appropriate RN

Address 982 Como Ave St Paul, MN 55103

Telephone Number 651 489-2170

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Sincerely,

Name Mike Contreras

Title, if appropriate

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Sincerely,

Name Penny Bowling

Title, if appropriate

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Carlington Ohio 45315

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VP