

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 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 Robbie Wedin

Title, if appropriate VP-200

Address 917 Quiet Place Ct, Walnut Creek, Ca.
94598

Telephone Number (925)-478-2255

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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: Terina Wilson, CNP

Title, if appropriate: CNP

Address: 1215 Newark Rd Zanesville, OH 43701

Telephone Number: 740-452-7359

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Sincerely,

Name Mary N. Morris

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 2101 Norwood Blvd Zanesville Ohio 43701

Telephone Number 740 453 - 1207

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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,

Name: **BILL S. WILLIAMS**

Title: **RETIRED**

Address: **23604 FOUNDERS PLACE DAMASCUS, MD 20872**

Telephone Number: **(240) 499-3326**

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Sincerely,

Name: Brittany Williams

Title: Graduate Student

Address: 800 Florida Avenue, Washington D.C. 20002

Telephone Number:

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Sincerely,

Name:

Title:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Yvonne Q
YVONNE ANDERSON, Ph.D. LCD Professor Emerita
6141 Fieldcrest Drive Federal, MD 21701
240-575-2050

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November 27, 2012

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Sincerely,

Name: Jack R. Gannon / Jackergannon
Title: Retired
Address: 7101 Bayers Mill Road, New Market, MD. 21774-6923
Telephone Number: 240 575 6193

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Sincerely,

Kathy Schroeder

Name

KATHY SCHROEDER

Title, if appropriate

ASL INTERPRETER

Address

40141 12TH ST. WEST PALMDALE, CA 93551

Telephone Number

661-992-3355

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Sincerely,

Name Dave Schroeder

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 40141 12st west Palmdale Ca 93551

Telephone Number 661 948 2238

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Le escribo para ofrecer mis comentarios sobre el anuncio publico de Federal Communication Commission (FCC) sobre la "Estructura y prácticas del servicio de retransmisión de video (VRS) del programa y sobre las propuestas de las tasas de remuneración de VRS."

Soy sordo y VRS es como me mantengo en contacto con mi familia y amigos que no son sordos. Estoy seguro de que las personas oyentes no pensar en lo que significa ser capaz de recoger el teléfono y llamar a cualquier persona en cualquier momento o en cualquier lugar que desee. Pero para mí, esto es todo. VRS ha cambiado mi vida.

Me alarma que la FCC se propone cambiar radicalmente el programa de VRS. ¿Por qué la FCC quiere arreglar algo que no está roto?

Creo que hay dos razones fundamentales para mantener el sistema actual de VRS en su lugar.

En primer lugar, me gusta esta compañía. No quiero que ser obligado de cambiar de compañía, porque el que yo uso se ha ido a la quiebra.

En segundo lugar, yo no quiero tener que comprar y montar mi propio equipo VRS. Tengo mi equipo sin costo de mi proveedor de VRS. Lo instalaron y hacen le mantenimiento. No sería justo para cambiar ahora y agregar esta carga para mí y otras personas sordas. Si el gobierno quiere evitar que las personas sordas puedan conectarse con los demás y utilizando VRS, esta es una buena manera de hacerlo.

El programa VRS funciona para las personas sordas. Es la forma en que nos comunicamos a diario con el mundo oyente y cómo el mundo oyente se comunica con nosotros. Cualquier cambio en el programa debe estar en el mejor interés de los estadounidenses sordos. Los cambios que están siendo consideradas por la FCC no lo son.

Atentamente,

Nombre Madaya Briton

Título Cosmetologa

Dirección C/La Paz Rio Piedras

Teléfono 787-513-1570

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Atentamente,

Nombre MARTHA VA KERRA

Título Hearing

Dirección ESTURION A-15 CAROLINA

Teléfono 787 (512) 0548

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Atentamente,

Nombre

Massiel Hernandez

Título

Abogada

Dirección

Urb. Vistamar, 839 Calle Teruel, Carolina, PR 00983

Teléfono

(787) 460-7967

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Atentamente,

Nombre Basilin A. Ogunde

Título Cosmetólogo

Dirección Padre Capelino 1090

Teléfono 787-765-2265

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En segundo lugar, yo no quiero tener que comprar y montar mi propio equipo VRS. Tengo mi equipo sin costo de mi proveedor de VRS. Lo instalaron y hacen le mantenimiento. No sería justo para cambiar ahora y agregar esta carga para mí y otras personas sordas. Si el gobierno quiere evitar que las personas sordas puedan conectarse con los demás y utilizando VRS, esta es una buena manera de hacerlo.

El programa VRS funciona para las personas sordas. Es la forma en que nos comunicamos a diario con el mundo oyente y cómo el mundo oyente se comunica con nosotros. Cualquier cambio en el programa debe estar en el mejor interés de los estadounidenses sordos. Los cambios que están siendo consideradas por la FCC no lo son.

Atentamente,

Nombre Milagros Abreu

Título Estilista

Dirección C. Caero-317 Valencia

Teléfono 787-530-1033

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Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
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Office of the Secretary
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FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

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 Forrest and JoAnn Whigham

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 6371 Stonecrest Drive - Brook Park, Ohio 44142

Telephone Number 216 370 7661

FAX 216 362 9131

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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.

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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.

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44142

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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,

Name: *Brent Watt*

Title: *Disability*

Address: *3 Swiftwater Dr # 4, Allenstown, NH 03275*

Telephone Number: *603 463-0875 Home*

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: *Hula Watt-White*

Title: *WORK*

Address: *3 SWIFTWATER DR. #14, ALLENSTOWN, NH 03215*

Telephone Number: *603 463 0575 Home P. WORK # 603 463 6131*

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Sincerely,

Name Karen Campbell

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1238 Pinnacle Dr., Columbus, OH 43204

Telephone Number 614-286-6606

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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 John and Bonnie Kasik

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 555 S. Nixon Camp Rd, Oregonia, OH 45054

Telephone Number 513 708 3139

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Sincerely,

Name Leonard Whigham

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 6371 Stonecrest Dr

Brook Park, OH 44142

Telephone Number 216 362 0600

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Sincerely,

Name Shawn & Debbie Aud

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 8310 Joe Haynes Road - Whitesville, Ky

Telephone Number 270 993-7662

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

Sincerely,

Name KATHY LYNN Johnson

Title, if appropriate 911

Address 3960 KARL Rd - APT B
Columbus, OH 43224

Telephone Number (614) 556-4677-VP

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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 Beverly D. Littleton

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1342 Manchester

Telephone Number (614) 461-3058

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Sincerely,

Name Maggie Collins

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 2243 Lexington ave

Telephone Number 614-556-4871

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

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DEC 03 2012

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

FCC Mail Room

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Telephone Number 614-556-4871

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Sincerely,

Name Karen Campbell

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1238 Pinnacle DR, Columbus, OH 43204

Telephone Number 614-256-6606

0
List: ASODE

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
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Washington, DC 20554

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Name Cindy A Latella

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 2582 Yates Ave Grove City, Ohio 43123

Telephone Number 614 808 1674

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Washington, DC 20554**

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Sincerely,

Name Anthony Latella, Jr

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 2582 Yates Ave Grove City Ohio 43123

Telephone Number 614-808-1674

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LIS, ASODE

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
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Sincerely,

Name Trisha Latella

Title, if appropriate Kindergarten Teacher

Address 2574 Village Brook Ln. Hilliard, Ohio 43026

Telephone Number 614-458-8187

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Sincerely,

Name Tara Latella

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 3556 Carrollton Ave Indianapolis, IN 46205

Telephone Number 614-975-2395

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

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FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

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,

Name: *Katy Walker*

Title: *ASL instructor*

Address: *P.O. Box 466, Braddock Heights, MD 21714*

Telephone Number: *240-397-5707*

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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