

10-51

November 19, 2012

Received & inspected

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

DEC 12 2012

FCC Mail Room

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 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,

Name Lina Metaweh

Title, if appropriate All for one one for all

Address 4044 Chicago Ave. South Mpls. Mn. 55407

Telephone Number 612-825-7423

No. of Copies rec'd 0
List ABCDE

Received & Inspected

DEC 12 2012

FCC Mail Room

10-51

2901 Aldersgate Rd

apt 213

Little Rock, AR,
72205

Federal Communication Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW Room 8-C445
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir or Madame,

Please save the Video Relay Service (VRS) with the Sorenson for we need to be able to use it to call for any emergency, business or social purposes.

I felt self esteem to be able to call to 911 or my Doctor or my family independently.

Thank you for your services to have the VRS for the Deaf Consumers to use it.

Sincerely
Jackie Stover

No. of Copies rec'd _____
List ABCDE

0