

Chairwoman Mignon Clyburn and/or incoming Chair Tom Wheeler;

I urge you to deny extension of the MPAA's request seeking waiver of Section 76.1903 of the Commission's rules. This waiver would allow studios to engage in "selectable output control," or "SOC." SOC would let Hollywood decide remotely which outputs I could use on the cable box and recording devices in my home. The waiver would take freedom away from people using these devices, would restrict people using free (as in freedom) open source software like MythTV to make and watch recordings, and would set a dangerous precedent against the public's interest. People have a basic right to not be controlled by the technology they use. Hollywood and set-top box manufacturers already violate this right by imposing Digital Restrictions Management (DRM) and proprietary software on the public. If you granted the waiver, you would be giving them even more power to trample on our rights. Individuals with analog HDTV's that lack HDMI inputs that is older HD TVs or older set top boxes from their pay TV provider (cable or satellite boxes without the new encryption) will be at a disadvantage.

In the past the FCC under former President George W. Bush's Administration wisely denied the MPAA's request for SOC but unfortunately in 2010 the FCC relented - although conditionally they granted MPAA a waiver. I am re-submitting my original comments against SOC from the last time asking you to not allow an extension. Selectable Output Control only disadvantages honest consumers and cripples their fair use rights. It does nothing to deter commercial copying, in fact as organizations like Public Knowledge made clear last time around hackers would find a way to break the encryption in SOC anyways and that SOC regardless would not deter commercial copying - for Internet availability. I am also submitting an article from last year raising the question has it gone from FUD to Dud? Very few movies have even been released in the last 2-3 years for pre DVD home viewing with SOC.

Now that audio and video are a natural part of how people communicate, the ability to record, archive, share, and remix audio and video is essential to free speech, political debate and cultural participation. Hollywood and the MPAA are pushing these restrictions because they want a world where they are free to communicate with us, but where we cannot freely communicate with each other. The FCC represents the public, not Hollywood. Don't give them more power to restrict our freedom to use media or to participate in politics and culture. As I understand it, the FCC also considers things like convenience, affordability, and economic impact in making its decisions. Other people have presented you with persuasive evidence that SOC will needlessly inconvenience viewers, will unfairly require the purchase of new equipment in order to watch certain movies, and will raise the price of basic equipment. But these questions should not even be considered when the cost is the public's freedom. Even if Hollywood does find a cost-effective and convenient way to enforce these restrictions, they should still be rejected. I urge you to deny Hollywood's waiver request. Sincerely, Maneesh Pangasa