Re: A. Allowing Hearing Individuals to Purchase Access to the Neutral Video Communication Service Provider for Point-to-Point Calls. There's no question that bilingual ASL/English language users and users of sign language should be allowed to make P2P calls with one another. I leave it up to FCC and the VRS experts to determine how this is to be done with the proviso that the FCC "Functional Equivalency" regulation be followed. To me this means that since bilingual English/Hispanic language users and users of the Hispanic language are able to make P2P calls, then "functional equivalency' requires that the same be available between ASL/English language users and users of sign language. Otherwise the only alternative to allowing bilingual Hispanic/English Individuals and Hispanic language individuals access to one another would be to require them to go through a version of what I'll call the Hispanic Language Relay Service. It doesn't take much imagination to conjure the reaction of the Hispanic community to be deprived of such a P2P service. And since the Hispanic population of 52 million people (as of 7/1/11) is almost 52 times larger than the population of "functionally deaf" people, Congress and the FCC would without any doubt be overwhelmed with protest from the Hispanic community. Because of the low incidence of "functionally deaf" (approximately 1 1/4 million)*, congress and FCC are certainly not going to be overwhelmed by protests from this group. I request that to give deaf individuals protest the "functionally equivalent" power that 52 million Hispanic people have, that you multiply each "functionally deaf" person's reaction by 41 as a fair measure of the feelings of the people they represent. So count my comment as 41 phone calls, emails, and all forms of communications sent to you.
* 1 1/4 million "functionally deaf" individuals calculated from the web page: http://research.gallaudet.edu/Demographics/deaf-US.php. This web page is from the Gallaudet Research Institute, 2011 and the basis for calculating the numbers is from their statement, "About 2 to 4 of every 1,000 people in the United States are "functionally deaf," though more than half became deaf relatively late in life; fewer than 1 out of every 1,000 people in the United States became deaf before 18 years of age."