

I work for a company in Meridian, Idaho called CaptionCall. I'm sure you're well aware of what is going on right now between us and the FCC. Currently, the Hard of Hearing and deaf community can get a CaptionCall phone for free. They still have to purchase internet service and a telephone provider, though. But none the less, the phone is still free. The FCC has proposed to start charging \$75.00 for each phone. Now, something we're all aware of is that as we age, medical problems arise; I'm sure a lot of the people in the hard of hearing or deaf community have such medical bills. Hearing aids alone are really expensive, and a lot of the time while I'm relaying for them I hear them talking about such things. Imaging having a disability and having to pay \$75.00 for a phone! Generally, CaptionCall users are not technology savy and that is why they prefer our phone. Plus, it is really unfair that people who don't have hearing disabilities can go to a thrift store and pick up a telephone for \$0.99. This is just a major road block for them, and it contradicts what the American's with Disabilities Act of 1990 states:

Sec. 12101 note: Findings and Purposes of ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Pub. L. 110-325, Â§ 2, Sept. 25, 2008, 122 Stat. 3553, provided that:

(a) Findings

Congress finds that-

(1) in enacting the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Congress intended that the Act "provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities" and provide broad coverage;

(2) in enacting the ADA, Congress recognized that physical and mental disabilities in no way diminish a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society, but that people with physical or mental disabilities are frequently precluded from doing so because of prejudice, antiquated attitudes, or the failure to remove societal and institutional barriers;

(Source: <http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm>)

As you can see, I have underlined the most important parts of what I have shown you. I feel this is what the FCC ought to be doing. I have also highlighted the word "barriers". This is exactly what the FCC needs to be fighting against, and yet they're the ones proposing that they put up such barriers to the people they're supposed to be protecting! What the FCC is proposing is a sort of discrimination. Why make the hard of hearing and deaf community pay \$75.00 for a phone, when people without such disabilities can pay \$0.99 or less at a thrift store?

Secondly, the ON/OFF Captions Button has greatly impacted the flow of calls I relay. I remember

hearing my Team Lead Supervisor making outbound calls to our current CaptionCall customers and hearing her yell into the phone to give them the message that now they have to hit "ON" when they want the captions to happen. This was frustrating and it defeats the purpose of the phone. Our customers were greatly impacted by this and very frustrated. I do not see a reason why there has to be an ON/OFF button. But if there has to be, make it set automatically to "ON" and then if someone doesn't need the captions, they can always hit "OFF". It's not a huge deal to set them to be automatically "ON". And I don't see why the FCC would need a doctor's certification that they are either mentally or physically incapable of doing so. I feel like this is just another unnecessary barrier that the FCC is throwing up to the people it should be protecting and fighting for.

As you can see, the FCC is not doing it's job. I love working for CaptionCall and I know how much our customers rely on our phone service. I love when people say, "I'm sure glad I have my captioned telephone here!" or when they can pay bills through automated systems or talk to their grandchildren for the first time via telephone. With such barriers, though, all of this will slowly cease to exist as less and less people will be using our service. Please don't let the FCC reverse it's amazing progress to eliminate discrimination against groups with disabilities like those of the deaf and heard of hearing communities.

Feel free to contact me anytime about this and about my job