

Tonia Trapp
7544 Keystone Dr. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
tonialeigh513@earthlink.net

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Kris Monteith
Acting Bureau Chief
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Reply to the Coalition of E-Reader Manufacturers' Petition for Waiver from CVAA
Accessibility Requirements, CG Docket No. 10-213

Dear Ms. Monteith,

I am a totally-blind working professional, and I help arrange accommodations for students with disabilities at the University of New Mexico. Staff at my office are sending a separate letter of protest, so I am writing this letter on behalf of myself as a blind person, and on behalf of my blind peers throughout the country. As blind people, our access to any and all kinds of books has been severely limited in comparison to the access that sighted people have. However, with the advent of technologies such as e-readers, our ability to read books of many kinds could be dramatically enhanced and increased if e-readers were accessible. For us, having greater access to books would help level the playing field in the educational arena and in the world of work, thereby helping more of us to obtain our career goals and become self-supporting.

I strongly oppose the Petition for Waiver submitted by the Coalition of E-Reader Manufacturers, requesting that e-readers be exempt from the Twenty First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA).

The spirit of the CVAA is to increase the accessibility of mobile advanced communications services (ACS), and e-readers have ACS functionality. Most e-reader users I know post to Facebook and exchange books with friends. It would not make sense to grant a waiver for a class of products that are clearly intended to be covered by the CVAA.

E-readers can easily be made accessible. All digital content can be made accessible to a blind person if the content is programmed to be read audibly, audio output like speakers or a phone jack are added, and accessibility is considered during the design phase. The Coalition's claim that to make e-readers accessible would require a fundamental overhaul of the equipment is false.

I want access to digital books. Since the first e-reader came out in 2006, I have felt like a second class citizen missing out on all of the innovative benefits of digital books. If I want to read a Kindle book, I have to buy a very-expensive Apple iPad. Then I can download the free Kindle

app, but that application is not fully accessible. I want to be a mainstream user and would happily buy an e-reader if one was accessible, but the manufacturers continue to exclude me from their customer pool. I reject the Coalition's notion that to make their product accessible would not provide me with any substantial benefits. In reality, it will give me options as a consumer and equal access as my sighted peers.

I strongly urge the FCC to reject the Coalition's petition and uphold the spirit of the CVAA. E-readers and the ACS features found in that equipment must be made accessible and granting a waiver would perpetuate the digital divide and discrimination in the marketplace that I face every day.

Sincerely,

Tonia Trapp