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September 3, 2013

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

Subject: CG Docket No. 10-213

Dear. Ms. Monteith,

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).

Previous comments on this web site by other consumers many of which are visually challenged have pretty much covered the reasons why granting this waiver is a terrible idea. So, I'll keep my comments brief.

The spirit of the CVAA is to increase the accessibility of mobile advanced communications services (ACS), and e-readers have ACS functionality. With an aging population, the number of visually challenged is increasing both in absolute numbers and as a % of the population. E-readers provide a cost effective way to learn, keep in touch with friends and family, keep up with the news and read books for enjoyment users. The list goes on. It is an essential tool to maintain the quality of life and not become a burden on the society.

E-readers can easily be made accessible by adding (or not removing) screen reading software (such as Kindle Read Aloud) and book readers (such as Bookshare Go Read). It is indeed sad that companies such as Amazon have dropped such software from recently introduced product updates. The incremental cost of providing decent speakers or audio jacks is minimal. In fact most of these products already have audio capabilities.

The claim by those seeking the waiver that other functions such as web access built into the E-readers are incidental and secondary is deceitful. These claims are contrary to how these devices are being sold in the market. Granting this waiver would perpetuate the digital divide for the visually challenged and discriminate in the marketplace that I face every day.

Sincerely,

Suresh Bazaj