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Kris Monteith  
Acting Bureau Chief  
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission 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 56 year old woman who has been blind most of my life. I am a Governor appointed member of the Executive Board of the New York State Commission for the Blind. I am a disability advocate and ADA trainer. I am also a voracious reader both for professional as well as recreational reading/listening.

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).

I just recently was able to get myself and I pad Minnie. I desperately wanted to have the same access to information as many of the people around me have. My friends and family all have mobile devices and I saw how they were able to get information quickly and easily, anywhere, any time. I see this as very important to have this access for in individual who is actively involved in the community for anyone regardless of their ability to see or not. The Coalition claims that the primary purpose of e-readers is reading, not ACS, and yet I believe that the ACS found in e-readers is part of the intended purpose. The ability to connect with friends, share content, and access the internet are the very features that set e-readers apart from print books. ACS facilitates the reading experience and is, therefore, a co-primary purpose of e-readers. It just does not make sense to have several devices to gain information that can be all had on one device like sighted people have at their disposal.

It is much less expensive for the rehabilitation agencies such as the state agency for the blind in each state to purchase students an accessible e-reader whether it is an apple product or a less expensive alternative that could easily be made accessible. It would save tax payers allot of money that could then be spent for other urgently needed rehabilitation services!

I have my I pad Minnie now and I can tell you it has made my life much richer with all the Aps that have been made available to me. I feel I can function in the world with much less stress and anxiety because I can plan out my day ahead of time and now with my I pad I can make adjustments to my schedule as I need to. I can look at my calendar to see when I have time to schedule meetings for the future rather than waiting until I get home to look it up on my computer, often only to find I have to reschedule because I now have a conflict that needs to be

fixed. I can consult my GPS to help me find an address or street without the need to find someone to help me.

We have successfully gained the necessary laws, and accessibility seems to never be a problem for companies to provide it to all other disabled people, as long as they are not blind! Yet we know it is possible, the technology is already available and has been for a long time now.

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,

Julie Phillipson M. Ed.