

The Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable (XX),

Founded in 1920, the Ohio Restaurant Association (ORA) is backed with more than 93 years of industry experience. Through our commitment, experience, and expertise the ORA is dedicated to the representation, education, assistance and promotion of Ohio's foodservice industry. This is why more than 2,400 companies, representing more than 5,000 locations in Ohio invest in an ORA membership.

Our members are troubled over recent reports that the FCC might end its decades-old sports blackout rule. This rule is a key part of a system that works for fans and business owners that watch NFL regular season and playoff games on free local television.

The blackout rule helps Cleveland's local economy. When the Browns stadium is at capacity, the local economy thrives. In fact, Browns home games have a significant impact on the Cleveland economy. Positively Cleveland did a study on the economic impact of a Browns game on the Cleveland economy and estimated that every Browns home game generates \$7.9 million for the local economy. Winking Lizard President Jim Callam said, "his downtown restaurant on a Sunday when the Browns are on the road is 200 mostly empty seats. When the Browns are at home, those 200 seats are filled three or four times." Football also makes Callam's suburban locations hum throughout the season because fans that don't attend the games enjoy watching together.

Nearly all (more than 99 percent) of last season's games were broadcast on free local television, and the NFL is actively working to see that fans have access to every game in 2014. The current system is strong and isn't in need of a government fix. Fans in Cleveland shouldn't be forced to pay to watch games they already get for free. Please help protect the local businesses, economy, and fans in Cleveland that depend on this important rule. Everyone wins when NFL stadiums are full, and games are on free TV.

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