



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 3, 2015

The Honorable Michael Bennet
United States Senate
458 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bennet:

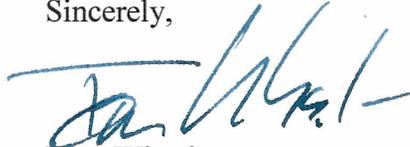
Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's (Commission) expeditious actions to put rules in place for implementing the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization Act (STELAR). I also thank you for your view urging the Commission to allow county commissions to file for market modifications on behalf of their residents. I know that you have consistently advocated for equal access to in-state broadcasts for all Coloradans, especially those in Southwest Colorado, where several "orphan counties" are located. State and local government officials in Colorado have also played an important role in this ongoing effort.

STELAR was enacted in December 2014, and Section 102 of this law gives the Commission authority to modify a commercial television station's local television market for purposes of satellite carriage rights. Prior to the enactment of STELAR, the Commission had authority to modify markets only in the cable carriage context. The Commission proposes to apply the existing cable rule to the satellite carriage context, while adding rules to address the unique nature of satellite television service.

On March 16, 2015, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which seeks comment on many of the rules necessary for implementing STELAR, including the issue you raise as to how satellite subscribers and their representatives, including local governments, can meaningfully advocate for receipt of in-state programming. I am hopeful that the proposed rules will offer an opportunity for residents in Colorado counties, such as Montezuma and La Plata, to receive in-state stations via satellite. While we are in the process of removing the regulatory issues, the ability of the market modification provision to successfully address orphan county problems in specific communities will depend in large part on satellite carriers' technical and financial ability to provide in-state stations to those areas. The comment period for this proposal ended this week, and we will carefully review the record in its entirety. The Commission is under a statutory deadline to adopt these rules by September 4, 2015.

I understand how deeply Coloradans care about receiving their in-state news, weather, sports, and entertainment, and I assure you the Commission is working diligently to achieve that goal. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance. Your views will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 3, 2015

The Honorable Cory Gardner
United States Senate
B40B Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Tom Wheeler



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WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
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June 3, 2015

The Honorable Scott Tipton
U.S. House of Representatives
218 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Tipton:

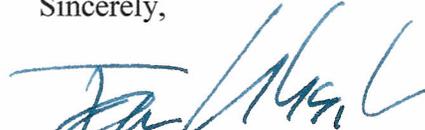
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