



*The voice of mid-size communications companies*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\* \* \* PRESS STATEMENT \* \* \***

(Washington) The following statement addressing FCC Chairman Wheeler's announcement that the FCC will not move forward in the pending retransmission consent reform docket was released today by ITTA - The Voice of Mid-Size Communications Companies and may be attributed to Genny Morelli, President of ITTA:

"ITTA is outraged that FCC Chairman Wheeler has decided to abandon efforts by smaller and new entrant MVPDs to obtain relief from dramatically escalating retransmission consent fees and increasingly anti-competitive negotiating tactics by large broadcasters. Failing to act on Congress's directive to address the harm to consumers under the current retransmission consent regime will reduce competition by smaller and new entrant MVPDs. When faced with unreasonably high retransmission fees or other discriminatory practices by broadcasters, smaller and new entrant video providers – unlike Comcast and other large vertically-integrated MVPDs – do not have the resources to undertake the dispute resolution processes pointed to by the Chairman as the 'answer' to anti-competitive broadcaster conduct.

According to a recent SNL Kagan report, the broadcast industry will receive upwards of \$11.6 billion in consumer-paid retransmission fees by 2022, nearly double the amount received in 2015. 'Competition, Competition, Competition' has been Chairman Wheeler's mantra since his arrival at the Commission. Yet his decision to side with broadcasters in the retransmission reform docket will have the opposite effect. It will reduce competition in the video distribution marketplace and could cost consumers billions of dollars in a government sanctioned transfer of wealth directly to broadcasters' pocketbooks."

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ITTA represents mid-size communications companies that provide a broad range of high quality wireline and wireless voice, broadband, Internet, and video services to residential and business customers in predominately rural areas across 45 states. For more information, please visit [www.itta.us](http://www.itta.us).