



For Immediate Release

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INCOMPAS to FCC: Video Roadblocks Delaying Broadband Competition

Competitive Networks Association Files Comments on STELA

WASHINGTON DC (December 2, 2015) – INCOMPAS, the competitive networks association (formerly COMPTTEL), has filed comments with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) arguing that advancements in residential broadband competition are being held back by the inability of providers to negotiate retransmission consent for broadcast programming at non-discriminatory and reasonable rates.

“Market power over video pricing has emerged as the ace up the sleeve for broadcasters seeking to cement their position in a shifting video marketplace,” said Chip Pickering, CEO of INCOMPAS. **“Broadband competition should mean that consumers will finally have the power to watch what they want, delivered by who they want. But the lack of transparency in video pricing and an inability to break the bundle is holding back the future of competition.”**

The filing, which can be found [HERE](#), indicates that new smaller broadband providers continue to face significant challenges securing retransmission consent agreements due to bad faith

negotiating techniques employed by broadcasters who maintain an overwhelming advantage in contract negotiations.

“From Kansas City and Austin to Detroit, we are seeing competition from new network providers like Google Fiber and ComSpan Communications lower broadband prices and increase speeds. But the opposite is happening in the video marketplace, where competitive customers are paying multiples more for the same video programming large incumbents get at a discount. This runs counter to free market principles, and must be addressed,”
Pickering added.

The INCOMPAS filing lays out a number of steps the FCC should take to remove the video roadblocks, including:

- **Break the Bundle:** End forced tying and carriage of additional channels/content and tiering of programming.
- **No Black Outs:** End the threat of blackouts during marquee events (typically sports or entertainment) or other special programming.
- **Video Sunshine:** Adopt measures to promote transparency of rates in retransmission consent negotiations in order to prevent price discrimination between small and large broadband providers.
- **Six Months Notification:** Require broadcasters to deliver a renewal proposal within six months of a current contract's expiration.

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About INCOMPAS

Formerly known as COMPTEL, INCOMPAS is the leading trade association for the competitive networks. INCOMPAS represents communications and technology companies large and small, advocating for laws and policies that promote competition, innovation and economic development. Learn more at www.incompas.org.

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