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**WTA Encouraged by Congresswoman Eshoo's Efforts to Reform Retransmission Consent Rules**

**WASHINGTON, DC (September 11, 2013)** – The Western Telecommunications Alliance is encouraged by the release of draft legislation by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee, that would update the nation's retransmission consent rules.

“WTA welcomes Congresswoman Eshoo's contributions to the much-needed debate about how to reform our out-of-date retransmission consent rules,” said Derrick Owens, WTA's Vice President of Government Affairs. “High prices for video programming have remained an obstacle for small rural video distributors looking to provide a competitive video subscription service to consumers in rural areas. An uneven regulatory scheme designed for a bygone era has forced small rural video distributors to pay higher per-subscriber rates than the already artificially high prices larger competitors pay for must-have content. The forced tying of associated programming has resulted in even further price increases for consumers.

“WTA looks forward to working with Congresswoman Eshoo and other policymakers to enact legislation that helps to avoid programming blackouts, while leveling the playing field for small rural video providers, increasing competition in the MVPD market and creating more options and lower prices for consumers,” said Owens.

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*The Western Telecommunications Alliance (WTA) represents more than 250 small, rural telecommunications carriers providing voice, video and data services in the 24 states west of the Mississippi River. WTA's members serve some of the most rural and hard-to-serve communities in the country and are the providers of last resort to these communities. For more information, please visit [www.w-t-a.org](http://www.w-t-a.org).*