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WTA Applauds FCC's Action on Reforming Retransmission Consent Rules

WASHINGTON, DC (March 31, 2014) – WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband applauds the FCC for adopting rules that prohibit joint negotiations by broadcast stations with different owners.

“WTA welcomes the FCC’s common sense action today in prohibiting unfair negotiation arrangements between broadcast stations with different owners,” said Derrick Owens, WTA’s Vice President of Government Affairs. “We hope that the FCC will capitalize on this momentum to address the uneven video regulatory scheme designed for a bygone era that has resulted in higher video programming costs for consumers.”

“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. Since small rural video distributors are often forced to pay higher per-subscriber rates than the already artificially high prices larger competitors pay for content, the FCC should focus on creating a more even marketplace for small providers to ensure a competitive backstop for national video distributors in rural markets.”

“WTA looks forward to working with the Commission on further reform efforts that will help 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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WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband represents more than 250 small, rural telecommunications carriers providing voice, video and data services. 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.