



THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

OCT 26 1999

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to urge the Conference Committee to expeditiously resolve the outstanding issues on H.R. 1554. The Administration believes the viewing public's interest should be of paramount importance during the Conference Committee's deliberations, and those deliberations should focus on two key goals - - enhancing consumer choice and promoting competition in the multichannel video marketplace.

This Administration has long supported efforts to achieve both of these goals. In this case, the Administration is particularly concerned that the broadcast carriage issues be decided in a way that promotes greater access to local television signals for all Americans and enables satellite service providers to offer services comparable to cable and thus spur competition.

As indicated in the April 26, 1999 Statement of Administration Policy on H.R. 1554, the Administration strongly supports the authorization of "local-into-local" service via satellite. The Administration, however, believes the legislation should provide for phased-in carriage of local broadcast signals. The Administration also urges the Conference Committee to refrain from imposing any other broadcast carriage regulation unless the Federal Communications Commission has had an opportunity to examine the potential technical and economic impact on satellite carriers.

The Administration also believes that the legislation should ensure that eligible consumers receive good quality distant network programming signals. The legislation should authorize the Federal Communications Commission to adopt an accurate means of determining whether a consumer can receive such a signal. Finally, the Administration urges the Conference Committee to take into consideration the impact of the transition to digital broadcasting on the Satellite Home Viewer Act and any new regulations required by the legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of the Administration's views on this very important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William M. Daley".

William M. Daley

Identical letters sent to:

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation

The Honorable Ernest F. Hollings
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation

The Honorable Henry J. Hyde
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee

The Honorable Thomas Bliley, Jr.
Chairman, Committee on Commerce

The Honorable John D. Dingell
Ranking Member
House Commerce Committee