



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

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Charles Crawford
Executive Director

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MAR 24 2000
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

March 24, 2000

Magalie Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W., TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Dear Ms. Salas:

RE: ACB Response to COMMENTS ON NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING IN THE
MATTER OF VIDEO DESCRIPTION OF VIDEO PROGRAMMING

MM Docket No.99-339

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) very much appreciates the opportunity to make our response to comments made in the above matter. Inasmuch as ACB is aware that other proponents of descriptive video with solid expertise in relevant areas will be responding to other comments, and in our desire to insure that the FCC is not over burdened with duplicative responses, ACB will limit our review and testimony to the comments of the National Federation of the Blind. This is appropriate since both ACB and NFB are the only two national organizations of civilian consumers who are blind.

The Federation opens their commentary with the fact that they support the continued development of descriptive video on a voluntary basis rather than a federal mandate. ACB applauds this recognition by the Federation that descriptive video is a valuable method of information access; however, we must point out that well over a decade of history shows that the only way descriptive video will ever provide our community with the access we seek is through the rules proposed by the FCC.

The Federation next creates an exemption from its own recommendation of only voluntary compliance, to allow for mandatory access to important information of a visual nature in areas such as the news and public affairs broadcasts, scrolling emergency and other text based information, and video of local sports scores. They then quickly make the point that these types of information are not purely entertainment and thus have a greater reason to be mandated. ACB agrees as we have testified in the past that such information is critical to have, if blind people are to be engaged in our community life. We therefore again applaud the stance of the Federation, but must disagree that what they minimize by characterizing as entertainment does not also have a critical role in the life of a blind person. In fact, television entertainment constitutes a major portion of time spent by most

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Americans and for blind persons to have the opportunity to fully engage in the mainstream, we must have the choice to share in the experience of others and hence to relate on an equal standing.

This notion of equal access fostering equal standing is at the heart of the discussion. While the Federation may not find various material in video description to be necessary, the reality is that visual occurrences and props were deliberately designed in the writing of the program to make, emphasize, and link other events and themes therein. The Federation discounts what they portray as the describing of costumes and lighting and so forth as a means of demonstrating a lesser value to description. Do these things not often set the tone, provide suspense as to the intent of the character, furnish clues to what might happen next, or give the viewer an opportunity to more fully understand with what the players in the production are contending? If a costume is an army uniform or the lighting is dark with menacing other actors present, then do these things not have direct bearing on the understanding of the program? Moreover, if the costume reveals something of the identity of the person wearing it, then should a blind person not have the same opportunity to put together the clues?

Next the Federation makes the point that there are not all that many blind persons and even within this population, there are many who can actually see the television except for scrolling text. They make this assertion to underscore the need for access to textual information that often is of an important nature. ACB clearly agrees that the text must be accessible and we offered solutions to that problem in our original testimony. However, for NFB to leave the reader with the impression that there are so few blind persons is misleading in that: 1) the assertion that folks with partial vision can see the screen ignores that they often cannot do so with the same results that descriptive video renders, 2) there is a substantial dispute as to the actual numbers of blind persons they represent to be impacted upon by the proposed rule, 3) there are many people labeled visually impaired or low vision who are not legally defined as blind that can benefit from video description just as hard of hearing people do from closed captioning, 4) Persons with low vision should not be forced to sit inches away from the screen or use magnification equipment for long periods of time which could have a negative impact upon their small amount of remaining vision, and 5) the use of numbers in what is essentially a civil rights issue only serves to imperil the rights of those affected.

The mixing by the NFB of numbers on the one hand, and a right to access to scrolling text on the other, further serves to confuse the issue. It begs the question of when are there enough numbers to justify what? Moreover, the civil rights aspect of access to information provided to the public cannot be subjected to capricious notions of you can ride the bus because you need to get places, eat at the restaurant because you need food, but not attend the movie because its only entertainment. There are to be sure, reasonable exemptions to the requirements of the proposed rules, but the arguments thus far from the Federation have not been informative to this standard.

Next the Federation offers nine discrete points to argue against video description. We will take these one at a time.

1. Federal mandate lacks sufficient support among blind people.

Here we paraphrase, that the Federation argues they are the largest organization of blind persons in the nation, they do not approve of mandatory video description, and the imposition of it would distract people from the really important issues.

Even if we put our doubts aside and took them at their word that they are the largest organization of blind persons, their own membership numbers suggest that the ninety five percent of the remaining blind population are on the jury that appears to be voting in favor of descriptive video. The sales of described video cassettes, the popularity of described video at the national conventions of both ACB and NFB, and the popularity of the emerging video description at first run movie houses all point to broad based support for the FCC rule. Furthermore, ACB absolutely supports the right of Federationists to choose not to watch descriptive video, but clearly our membership and the blind community at large must reject their self-presumed authority to make that choice for the rest of us. ACB is attaching hundreds of letters from blind people across the United States to underscore this point.

2. Audio description not an analogue to closed captioning.

Here the federation makes the point that there are many radios sold that have television sound and hence the programming content can be understood as contrasted to closed captioning which is required for such understanding. ACB agrees that these radios are very beneficial for certain purposes, but to argue that they can replace the visual information in a program defies common sense. These radios can be very useful for listening to morning talk shows, evening news and other programs where you are not fully paying attention; but it would be hard to find many who purchased these radios gathered around the living room during prime time, listening to their favorite programs. If this were the case, then the blind community would have never embraced video description in the way that it clearly has.

3. No standards exist.

Here the Federation would have us believe that descriptive video is much more difficult to produce since unlike closed captioning, there are a great number of subjective judgments that must be made on what is to be presented. They go on to make the point that some video described programs are annoying and producers should not be forced to make costly investments in them.

The Federation is highly misinformed in both of these areas. Closed captioning requires many judgements as to how to report what is being said since it is not always possible to do a word for word transcription. Closed captioning also requires judgements as to timing and placement as well as the translation of music and sound effects into text equivalents. These judgements are similar to the decisions made by a video describer.

In the matter of costs, ACB has already testified on the cost issue and demonstrated that these costs are so small as to be insignificant when viewed in the context of the budgets of television production. This information has also been verified with those producing descriptive video.

4. Safety first.

Here the NFB makes the point that any secondary audio channel use should be used for emergency information. Then the Federation uses the following example to make the point:

"It would indeed be ironic if the SAP channel were unavailable to warn blind people about an impending emergency because it was already tied up describing the set of some sitcom so that a network could comply with its government-imposed audio description mandate."

This quote unfortunately demonstrates three points. First, the Federation is not allowing for the utilization of inserted information into the SAP channel that could be done irrespective of whether it was occupied or not. Second, the reference to a situation comedy versus vital information makes for good drama, but hardly their point. Third, the anti-government sentiment mentioned in the example is gratuitous and at best reflective of a differing agenda.

5. The news exclusion.

Here NFB points out that live news shows that display the name of a speaker should make that information available and must be seen as having more importance than video described entertainment.

ACB agrees that video described or other ways of making this information available is highly important. Using this singular concern, however, as a way to dismiss video description of entertainment would be to deny blind audience members with the choice of what they would watch. Moreover, placing the choices into an equation of news or nothing is a denial that both news and entertainment can happen simultaneously on different channels as it already does for television audiences.

6. Other printed information.

ACB agrees with the points made by the Federation with respect to what we have called video graphics. We quote them here to save the reader the time of having to search for them in the NFB comments.

"Many advertisements contain print-displayed information such as phone numbers and addresses. Some of these advertisements are carried on networks, but others are local. Just behind print-displayed emergency and news information, our experience is that blind people complain most about not being able to get the information printed on the screen during advertisements. This information is sometimes health-related. Sometimes it steers people to other sources of information, such as government agencies. Many blind people have reported calling stations only to find out that such information is not retained by the stations. Without the information being voiced as it is displayed in print visually, there is simply no way blind people can get the data."

7. Focus on needed information instead of networks.

ACB is not clear on where the Federation is going with this point. They seem to assume that information that needs to be described which originates at the local level is exempted from the rule.

We believe the rule covers this issue already.

8. Needs of Spanish-speaking blind people.

The Federation makes the point that Spanish-speaking blind people would be better served by having the secondary audio channel used for translation of English dialogue into Spanish rather than an English rendering of video description. ACB has already addressed the issue of Spanish and other competing SAP interests in our original comments and does not see any significant difference in this matter.

9. Conclusion.

NFB concludes with the recommendation that the FCC put news and emergency voice output first, then deal with entertainment with a view to all program originators.

ACB concludes that the proposed rules further the interests of the blindness community and that the issues raised by the Federation that are material to video description itself can be accommodated within the context of the current proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles H. Crawford".

Charles H. Crawford
Executive Director



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APPENDIX A

257 Letters of Consumer Support

All Letters of Support for Descriptive Video are attached to
the original document



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257 Letters of Consumer Support

All Letters of Support for Descriptive Video are attached to
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Anne Fesh

From: Michael Byington [michael.byington@envisionus.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 4:34 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'; 'ecfs@fcc.gov'; 'bkennard@fcc.gov'; 'sness@fcc.gov'; 'hfurchtg@fcc.gov'; 'mpowell@fcc.gov'; 'gtristan@fcc.gov'; 'abyington@cjnetworks.com'; 'sja3@southwind.net'; 'goren@southwind.net'; 'webmaster@fcc.gov'; 'troth@ink.org'
Subject: video description

TO: The Federal Communications Commission

FROM: Michael Byington, Director of Governmental Affairs, Envision

RE, Docket 99339 - Video Description

March 23, 2000

Envision is a not for profit corporation which provides employment, rehabilitation, and advocacy services for people who are blind or who have low vision. Most of our operations are located in the State of Kansas although we engage in some employment related activities on a nation wide basis. Of our 200 employees, over 100 are blind. We serve over 500 persons who are blind per year with regard to employment, community resources, rehabilitation services, or advocacy services.

Our experience is that our blind employees and associates find video description to be essential to having equally effective communications when compared with sighted peers, Video description is a matter of equal access to information.

We support video description being provided by all television networks and for all programming. We believe it is a service equivalent to closed captioning for people who are deaf or hearing impaired, and that it should be at least as readily available as closed captioning.

We deplore comments from certain organizations claiming to represent the blind population, and claiming that video description is not necessary for entertainment programming, or suggesting that there should be a prioritization where things such as weather alerts take precedence over other types of entertainment and educational information available alike to any sighted person who may choose to watch television. We can not put a value on information and say that blind people are only entitled to some of it. In our view, to do so would be to raise our own version of violating the first amendment of the United States Constitution.

As to the Constitutional arguments made by some of the major networks, and suggesting that imposing video description on an artistic product in some way alters free speech by making the product something other than what it originally was, the network concerns are not consistent with a logical and reasonable interpretation of Constitutional law.

The argument of the attorneys for the networks and certain other commentators is that the (they allege, scripted, descriptive comments may feature mis-interpretations, or different interpretations from the original creators of the artistic product. They suggest that this limits the free speech of the creator or creators of the original artistic product. The fallacy with this logic is that video description is brought into the television set voluntarily through the separate audio programming (SAP) feature of the television. The original artistic product is still available

untouched, and in its original form. The video description is not present unless the SAP is voluntarily engaged. A more true analogy would be that I could go purchase an expensive piece of art. I could then display that art in a frame which some critics do not like or do not feel compliments the art in ways they feel it should. The use of such a frame does not compromise the original art. It is an overlay which can be removed. This is a good direct analogy of what video description is to the artistic product being described. It is a frame, an overlay. It does not change the original product and it can be removed.

Transversely, the Constitutional arguments fall squarely in support of a wide spread requirement for video description. A few years ago, Congress decided to no longer allocate money to print the Braille issue of "Playboy" Magazine. Certain Congresspersons felt that blind people did not need access to the type of written materials in "Playboy." The pictures have never been reproduced for Braille users. At least, Congress felt that the Government should not control or participate in the provision of this type of information for people who are blind. This issue received judicial review, and the courts found that the withdraw of the Braille edition of "Playboy" when indeed this publication was requested by many more blind readers than was the case with other documents the federal government Brailles, was to subject the blind to a level of censorship and with-holding of information greater than is placed on sighted citizens. The court ruled that when there is a way in which equal access to information, and equally effective communications, can be provided, then indeed this level of access must be provided in order to insure equal access to information. This same argument fits quite well into the line of questioning the FCC has undertaken with regard to video description. To not require it, given that it is possible, is to barr access to information and thus to limit the first amendment rights of people who are blind.

Some of the commentators also suggest that there is an undue burden of expense in providing video description. It must be pointed out that the most expensive way of providing the service is the only one they are addressing. The creation of a video description tract does not need to be a two tiered process. Video description is often done for live theatre. The methods used in these types of presentations is that the video describer attends some rehearsals of the play, or productions of the show prior to the description being done. This allows for a certain amount of familiarity or "rehearsal" on the part of the description personnel, but then the description is done live, and without script. This method could be used in creating initial description tracts for television shows as well. It would perhaps not be quite the quality of fully scripted and rehearsed description, but it would be much less expensive and would negate the two tiered production argument made by segments of the industry.

Blind and low vision people are simply asking for the same information the rest of society gets. This has relevance far past the concept of being entertained. Sighted people learn about what is popular in fashion, what is appropriate attire for a job interview, etc. largely from sources such as television. This is the kind of information which is not available for people who are blind or low vision without video description. It is information which helps people who are blind and low vision be productive and fit into society.

Lastly, I want to provide some personal comments. I am legally blind. My vision is estimated to be around 20/200 to 20/300, and this puts me at the top end of legal blindness. I always thought I was seeing television pretty well and getting most of the story until I heard my first video description and found out all of the things I had been missing. My wife is totally blind. When we watch

television together, this experience too allows me to realize how important video description can be. More times than I can count, my wife has asked me during a non-dialogue section of a thrilling television show, "What's happening?" More often than not, I learn at the voicing of this question that, I really do not know. I have been fooling myself into thinking I see well enough to really know what is happening on television, but I do not.

Macular degeneration has now become the leading cause of blindness. It results in vision much like that which I have always experienced due to a birth defect, but the condition is most prevalent in people who are over the age of 65. These are retired tax payers who have the time to enjoy television, an they should have the right to still be able to get the information they need.

Please make the networks provide access so all Americans may have equal access to information. Thank you.

□

Anne Fesh

From: Mike Duke [MikeD@etv.state.ms.us]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 2:09 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Video description

Mike Duke,
President,
Mississippi Council of the Blind

Mike Duke
Reading Service Coordinator
601-432-6301

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:09 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive Video

To whom it may concern:

I have been involved with the blind community for the past twelve years. I have had the opportunity on many occasions to describe television and motion picture to the blind and visually impaired. I know at times throughout the programming that I have missed important facts that the blind viewer needs to know. I believe that descriptive video enhances the viewing for blind and visually impaired. I am not blind or visually impaired but I do support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket #99-339

My name is Monica Lederbrand
Administrator
Mary Bryant Home
2960 Stanton Ave
Spfld, IL 62703

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:25 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

My name is Grace Barnes, I am blind and 84 years old. I live at 2960 Stanton Avenue, Springfield, IL, 62703. I support support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:29 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

My name is Rita Betit, I am blind and 71 years old. I live at 2960 Stanton Avenue, Spfld, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:31 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

My name is Joann Bolen, I am blind and 67 years old. I live at 2960 Stanton Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video Docket MM 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:33 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

I am Donald Bormet, I am blind and 61 years old. I live at 2960 Stanton Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:35 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

I am Ellen Boxrud, I am blind and 66 years old. I live at 2960 Stanton Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703. I support the proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:39 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

My name is Sharon Fisher, I am blind and 50 years old. I live at 2906 Stanton Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:49 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

My name is Charlen Crawford, I am blind and resident of the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind. My Home is located at 2960 Stanton Avnue, Springfield, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:51 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Sharon Fisher, I am blind and I support the FCC Proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:53 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Robert French, I am blind and reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:54 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Sharon Foust, I am Blind and reside at tthe Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:56 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My Name is Karon Foust, I am blind and I reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:57 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Deb Gaultney, I am blind and I reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Avenue, Spfld, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:59 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support video services

My name is Gerry Graff, I am blind and I reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Avenue, Spfld, IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:01 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support video services

My name is Elizabeth Guile, I am blind and I reside at the mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:02 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Helen Haavind, I am blind and I reside at 2960 Stanton Ave.,
Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video
MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:03 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Matt Haavind, I am blind and i reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Penny Reeder [preeder@acb.org]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 12:45 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support video description

9504 Cape Anne Place
Montgomery Village, MD 20886
March 21, 2000

> The Honorable William E. Kennard, Chair
> Federal Communications Commission
> 445 Twelfth Street, S.W., TW-A325
> Washington, D.C. 20554

>

>Dear Chairman Kennard:

I am writing to thank you and your colleagues at the Federal Communications Commission for deciding to make rules requiring the major television networks to provide video description during prime-time programming for people who cannot access visual information on their tv screens (MM Docket No. 99-339). I am one of those people.

I understand that the FCC has received a number of negative comments on these proposed requirements, and I am writing to urge you to stay the course, so to speak, because video description will be so important to my generation of blind people and to those who will follow.

Understanding visual concepts is often quite difficult for visually impaired children. This difficulty can have enormous negative ramifications for their educational and social progress, and impede their real integration into mainstream American society thenceforth. When visual information can be understood and accessed easily, even blind children can grasp the meaning of the visual world. When these concepts can be taught as a matter of course--for instance, by watching the same television shows their peers and families are watching, blind children will learn the information they need to know to read, to understand, to fit in--painlessly, and, in fact, enjoyably. Video description can make this kind of learning possible.

Television is such a cultural index in our country. Whether or not one still defines the medium as a "vast wasteland," there is no denying that TV is the mechanism we Americans turn to, to define ourselves and to understand one another. Blind people have just as much need as any other Americans to experience this medium. Television has become a subtext to nearly everything we Americans do. Even though many people hesitate to admit that they become couch potatoes every evening as they unwind from their days' work

in front of their tubes, the networks know how important their television programs are to Americans, and so does everyone else.

Once video description for prime-time television programming becomes a reality, when friends and colleagues discuss the latest happenings on a video-described situation comedy like "friends," or a dramatic program like "ER," visually impaired people who will have experienced exactly the same information as their sighted colleagues will be able to join in those conversations, share those cultural experiences, and feel--finally--as though they belong.

Thank you for proposing rules which will require the networks to provide us with the same information which our sighted colleagues take so for granted! I hope that, notwithstanding the negative comments you have received from many of the same people who told you that providing closed captioning for people who are deaf would be too expensive, or difficult, or whatever--you will continue to recognize the importance of making the medium which catalogs, explains, and delineates our shared cultural experiences accessible to those of us who cannot always perceive it with our eyes.

A few weeks ago, I was traveling for business, and I found myself watching "ER" (NBC, Thursdays at 10:00 p.m.) alone in my hotel room. The week before, I had watched the show with my fourteen-year-old daughter. The show had ended with a crisis in progress, which I knew because my daughter had described all the crucial scenes for me.

When I watched the show alone in my hotel room, there were elements of the continuing story which I just could not figure out. Finally, feeling frustrated--and totally dependent--I called my daughter, at the end of the show, so she could tell me what had happened.

Now, this experience is not an earth-shattering one in the whole scheme of things. But, wouldn't it have been nice if I had not had to experience this lack of access and this need to depend on another person for such routine information? It will be so easy for the networks to screen me in, rather than out. Video description is really not very expensive. And, there are about twelve-million Americans who are visually impaired, like I am, who can benefit from this simple accessibility option.

Thank you for your tireless efforts to make information accessible to me, and to people like me.

Sincerely,

Penny Reeder
Editor, The Braille Forum
American Council of the Blind

12-11-17

12-11-17

Anne Fesh

From: Barbara Rhodes [brhodes@pacbell.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 12:41 AM
To: info@acb.org; Pam Brandin
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video Services

Dear Chairperson Kennar and Members of the FCC:

I am chairperson of the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (PCBVI). PCBVI is an agency that provides services for more than 1,000 consumers annually in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties in California.

I have polled the membership of the CAC and they requested me to send you a message of support for the proposed rule making for Descriptive Video Services.

Most of our membership is blind/visually impaired, or have a family member who is so impaired and we support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Video description gives us access to the the visual information being shared, (It is so nice to know who kissed, hit, crashed into, bumped into, etc -- who gave who a touch, look, turn their back, etc. It is also nice to know who spilled something, knocked something over, what kind of costumes are being worn, who is wearing short-shorts, etc., etc -- all the nuances that are reflected visually, that give needed, meaningful information to the "flavor" of the presentation.

I respectfully suggest that each and every opponent to providing audio description make a commitment to disable the video portion of their television and watch programming they are not familiar with with only the audio information provided. I also suggest that they watch some of the PBS programming with descriptive video (still with the screen off). I believe if they did this for a week, or a month, they would become a major supporter of this readily achievable service. Until you walk in our shoes, you don't realize how much visual cues and information is received and is an important component of the program that must be shared either visually or by audio description.

The Federal Communications Commission has issued proposed rules to require increasing amounts of descriptive video on television. Over time, this would afford blind people expanding access to television programming much in the same way that our friends in the deaf community now enjoy closed captioning.

It is also imperative that during emergencies, that the information being "rolled" on the screen, be presented audibly. We cannot tell you how many times I have "heard an advertisement" (music and a few words), but didn't have a clue what was being shown/advertised. In reality, this is a disservice to all who don't have their eyes on the screen (i.e persons who went to the kitchen during a commercial break to get a snack beverage, medication, etc). This could be a win-win situation for everyone. Providing the descriptive video gives the information to everyone who can't see the screen -- either because they can't see or they are not sitting in front of the screen. Please continue your support for this needed accommodation.

Sincerely,

Barbara Rhodes
Chairperson
Consumer Advisory Committee
PENINSULA CENTER FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
2470 El Camino Real

Palo Alto, CA
650 858-0202
brhodes@pacbell.net

Anne Fesh

From: PA Council of the Blind [pcb1@bellatlantic.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 1:31 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

From: John A. Horst
To: Info

I, John A. Horst, 249 Holly St., Elizabethtown, PA 17022, am a legally blind person. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339.

Descriptive Video is important for all blind people. They, like any other American, need full access to all video broadcasting. This is not possible without descriptive video.



Anne Fesh

From: DREAMANGEL [dreamangel1980@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 2:34 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video Services.

Janice Sloan
4940 Penrose AVE.
Fort Worth, TX 76116
(817) 763-8657

Do You Yahoo!?
Talk to your friends online with Yahoo! Messenger.
<http://im.yahoo.com>

Anne Fesh

From: Jeanette M Schmoyer [jmschmoyer@juno.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 4:16 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support DVS

Dear members of the FCC:

I am writing to support the implementation of descriptive audio services on television and movies.

AS a visually impaired person whose acuity is measured at 2/2000, watching TV or movies is exclusively an audio experience for me. As you can imagine, in most instances, the story line is lost through many silences and music only interludes during a show or movie. In addition, there is no way to determine those subtle movements or facial expressions that say so much in a story line. DVS, a descriptive audio service fills those gaps for a person who is blind or visually impaired. It is a matter of equal access for many citizens in this country. A growing number of the people as the population of the elderly increases, are losing vision and would benefit from these services.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,
Jeanette M. Schmoyer

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<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/tagj>.

Anne Fesh

From: E. M. Kirtley [ekirtley@tnl-online.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 7:11 PM
To: Info@acb.org
Subject: descriptive video

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wholly support the idea of receiving all movies in descriptive video. I have no vision, and have never been able to enjoy movies until now. The first I ever experienced was at a convention. As i say I am totally blind, and support "MM Docket number 99-339."

My mailing address is P.O. Box 16984, San Diego California 92176-6984. Thank you for your consideration.

Mrs. Ethel. M. Kirtley

Anne Fesh

From: Barbara Lombardi [k1eir@worldnet.att.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 7:48 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video service

Attn: FCC: I'm Barbara Lombardi, a totally blind person residing at 212 Soundview Avenue, Shelton, Ct. 06484. Part of my enjoyment is watching TV and have had the experience of watching some documentaries plus movies through descriptive video broadcasts. There is truly nothing like it for one who cannot see the screen! It offers those of us without sight the opportunity to gain a fuller dimension of the broadcast and most importantly, the visual information becomes accessible to us through the narrative description. I've been told that even people with sight enjoy it and benefit from it.

In America today, there are increasing numbers of men and women over 65 who have difficulty with their sight. Descriptive video would be a valuable asset to a great number in our population. I strongly support docket mm number 99339.
Barb kleir@att.net

Anne Fesh

From: janelle edwards [jedwards@flinthills.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 8:50 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Importance: High

I am blind and support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. My reasons will follow.

I am totally blind and have been so all of my life. The description of costumes and scenery is not important to me. I realize that these things may be important to other blind people though.

I can also follow many sitcoms without assistance. There are times in sitcoms though when I wonder why the audience members laughed. Sometimes I wonder what happened as the story was not complete and I only heard music until the show ended. Description of these types of moments would help me follow such shows much more accurately.

Action packed shows are even harder for me to follow. For example, at the end of the show a shot rang out. Who shot who? Did the intended victim die? Here is another example. The would be murderer traps the victim in a place with rising water, or that is burning, etc. How did the person escape (we know that he did from subsequent dialogue). These are just three of the many frustrations that I have experienced while listening to television programs.

Please help me to encounter less of this frustration, and more of the same level of enjoyment that my sighted friends experience when they watch TV.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Janelle Edwards

Anne Fesh

From: Al and Eunice [makdog@interfold.net]

Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 10:49 PM

To: info@acb.org

Subject: I support descriptive video

This e-mail is to include three of us and our support of descriptive video. We are Al and Eunice Alton at 3100 South Corona Street, Englewood, Co 80110 and Dale Alton 3352 West Laurel Lane, Littleton, co 80123. We want it to be known that we fully support descriptive video for all blind individuals. All three of us are blind people who feel that we each have a right to express our own thoughts independently and not have some organization like the Federation tell us or others what we think.

Thank you for this opportunity to voice our independent feelings on this subject. If the Federation does not wish to take advantage of such a service, that is their choice just as it is ours to choose to use it if we want.

Al, Eunice and Dale Alton

Anne Fesh

From: Kathey Wheeler [katheyw@primenet.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 11:55 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

Gentlemen:

Descriptive Video allows me, a blind person, to enjoy television independently. With DVS, when nobody who can see is in the room, I am able to know why the tv audience is laughing.

I thoroughly enjoy knowing what color somebody's dress is and when he kisses her.

I hope you will make every effort to continue descriptive video. It brings fun to life.

Kathey Wheeler, 3612 South Forest Avenue, Independence, Missouri 64052.

Thank You,

Kathey Wheeler

katheyw
katheyw@primenet.com

Anne Fesh

From: Michelle McGrew [mcgrew@rahul.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 11:56 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Silicon Valley Council of the Blind
P. O. Box 493
Mountain View, CA 94042-493
March 18, 2000

To the Federal Communications Commission:

We, the Silicon Valley Council of the Blind, wish to express our support of the proposed rules for descriptive video service as described in MM Docket No. 99-339. As one of the largest chapters of the California Council of the Blind, we represent over 60 members, most of whom are blind or visually impaired.

Attached is a copy of a resolution supporting the proposed rules which we passed at our meeting today.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Michelle McGrew, President
Phone: (408) 737-2050

Resolution in Support of Descriptive Video Service
to be transmitted to the Federal Communications Commission
>From the Silicon Valley Council of the Blind
a chapter of the California Council of the Blind
And an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind

Whereas the Federal Communications Commission has published proposed rules making audio description of video content, often referred to as "Descriptive Video Service," a recognized method of providing equal access, insofar as possible, to television content by people who are blind or visually impaired, and

Whereas this proposed rule mandates such description on a limited number of hours of commercial television programming, and

Whereas the Commission has requested comments on this proposed rule under MM Docket No. 99-339, and

Whereas the technical feasibility of descriptive video service has been well established by the Public Broadcasting Service and several other programmers, and

Whereas there is a precedent for such an access requirement in the closed captioning provided for people who are deaf or hearing impaired, in which case the FCC required modifications to set manufacture as well as hours of programming, and

Whereas we, the members of the Silicon Valley Council of the Blind, are familiar with the benefits of description in various contexts, a number of us having attended many plays and other events with description, now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Silicon Valley Council of the Blind in regular monthly

meeting assembled, this 18th day of March, 2000, in the city of Mountain View, in the state of California, that we support the FCC's proposed rule and pledge ourselves to work for the implementation of Descriptive Video Service in whatever ways are in our power, and be it further

Resolved that we support the testimony and representations of the leadership and staff of the American Council of the Blind in this matter.

Silicon Valley Council of the Blind

Michelle McGrew, President

Mike Keithley, Recording Secretary

Anne Fesh

From: jeanne l donovan [nsshead3@juno.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 3:28 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Jeanne Donovan. I live at 548 Hadley West Drive, Haverhill, MA 01832. I am Blind. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket #99-339.

Thank you

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<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/tagj>.

Anne Fesh

From: Jennifer Dubbin [jdubbin@uswest.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 6:02 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am blind and I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Jennifer Dubbin
136 Western Ave. S.
St. Paul, MN 55102
jdubbin@yahoo.com

Anne Fesh

From: JEckert584@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 2:01 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am blind and president of the Augusta Chapter of the Georgia Council of the Blind. According to the 1990 census there are approximately 10,000 blind and vision impaired persons in Augusta, GA. Our group has been working on this issue for the past year with local TV stations and cable company. As a group we strongly support proposed descriptive video rules under MM docket number 99-339.

Jack T. Eckert, President
122 Kings Chapel Road
Augusta, GA 30907

Anne Fesh

From: Mike keithley [MKeithley@compuserve.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 2:13 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I support descriptive video!

Hello

Name: Mike Keithley

Address: 191 E El Camino Real #150
Mountain View California 94040

This message is in support of Descriptive Video Services under MM Docket number 99-339.

I am blind and have experienced the thrill of knowing what's going on in videos and NPR broadcasts that use Descriptive Video Services.

Thank you

Anne Fesh

From: Roger D. Petersen [petersen@svpal.org]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 3:00 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video Service

In the matter of MM Docket 99-339,

My name is Roger D. Petersen and I live at 2211 Latham Street, #120, Mountain View, CA 94040.

I am writing in support of the FCC's proposed rule making Audio Description, or Descriptive Video Service a part of commercial television programming as an access measure for people who have visual impairments.

I have listened to descriptions in movies, television and live theater, and I can say without equivocation that description adds greatly to the understanding and enjoyment of all these media by blind and visually impaired people. Furthermore, PBS and Narrative Television Network, among others, have demonstrated the technical and aesthetic feasibility of description.

If I may cite as a precedent the provision of closed captioning for the deaf community, I think it is a reasonable analogy to follow this precedent in the type of gradual fashion that the Commission has proposed. Furthermore, in the case of closed captioning, there was a requirement to modify set manufacture. This may be required in this case as well, since on most currently available sets, a blind person cannot independently access the SAP channel, as it is done through onscreen menus.

One additional point I feel compelled to make is that as a former member of the National Federation of the Blind, I can testify that there is a sharp contrast between the decision making process in NFB as compared to ACB. Policy in NFB is dictated by a leadership group from an ideological perspective, rather than by assessing the opinions of the rank and file membership.

In the American Council of the Blind, on the other hand, an organization of more or less equivalent size, resolutions are presented by the membership to the resolutions committee and the organization's constitution requires that the committee bring all of them to the floor, where they are handled democratically.

In closing, let me say that the leadership and staff of the American Council of the Blind who testify and otherwise advise the Commission represent me.

Thank you for your attention,

Roger Petersen

Anne Fesh

From: Patricia Ellis [robin308@ime.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 3:50 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

Pat Ellis
RR 7 BOX 962
Augusta, ME 04330
I support descriptive video per MM Docket No. 99-339. I am blind and a member of ACB.

Anne Fesh

From: Red167@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 5:52 PM
To: Info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Allen Jones. I am legally blind and my address is:
P.O. Box 70046
Sunnyvale, CA 94086-0046

I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339, because I rent and buy descriptive videos. I really enjoy them and feel I should have the same opportunity to enjoy these services on regular TV.

Thank you.

Allen Jones

Anne Fesh

From: VICMIL@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 7:02 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video.

My ten year old son loves descriptive video. He has never had any sight and cannot apply past visual input to what he hears on television or in the movies. In theatres, we must whisper important visual cues. This limits his independence. Please remember that more premature and sick infants survive their birth experience every year. Many of these children will have a visual impairment. This means that there are now more blind children who will soon become blind adults. Please remember the children when you consider funding for descriptive video.

I support descriptive video. Victoria Gorman Miller
3910 Pocahontas Ave.
Cincinnati , OH 45227

Anne Fesh

From: debbie ralston [sunnydisco@mediaone.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 7:46 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: support dvs

Debbie Ralston

52 Cypress St.

Manchester, NH

legally blind-visually impaired

I support the FCC rule mm docket no.99-339. The blind community needs to have dvs included in movies or television when it is produced. I can follow a movie or show so much better with the dvs because I know what is happening & what the characters look like. I can watch a movie or television by myself & follow it like anyone sighted person. I owned video cassette movies with dvs & enjoy watching them so much because I can follow the action. It would not cost any more to add dvs when a movie or television show is being produced. I need to have dvs in everything that I watch be it either a motion movie or a television show.

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:05 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Paul Hubbard, I am blind and I live at the Mary Bryant Home, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:07 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Barb Keith, I am blind and I reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 tanton Ave., Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:09 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Lillian Kirby, I am blind and I reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive Video MM Docket No.99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:11 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Florence Lasley, I am blind and I reside at the Mary Bryant Home, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:12 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Chris Long, I am blind and I reside at the mary Bbryant Home, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld., Il 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:28 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Mae Lowery, I am blind and I resides at the Mary Bryant Home, 2960 Stanton Ave, Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:30 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Stan Lucas, I am blind and I resides at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Avenue, Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Monica Lederbrand [mbha@springnet1.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 8:32 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Doris Magers, I am blind and I reside at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind, 2960 Stanton Ave., Spfld., IL 62703. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Anne Fesh

From: George S McDermott [revgeo@eudoramail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 9:02 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive video

the Rev. George KS. McDermott
P. O. Box 17187, Main Street kStation
kWorcester, Massachusetts 01601-7187
(508) 795-1118

I would like to lend my support to the kFederal kCommunications Commission proposed Descriptive Video rules, MM document 99-339 which would request the movie industry as well as Television networks and Cable TV to include descriptive audio track to their programming and all movies. I am totally blind, and find that when I am alone watching television, it is not always possible for me to know what is going on on the screen. It is my belief and feeling that I should have the same privileges as those who are sighted to not only to understand what is happening when there is no dialogue, as to know emotional reactions facially etc. It enhances my own independence to be able to share with others following a film or other program some of the events going on that were not part of the dialogue. It also frees up other members of my household from having to spend their time describing what is happening and thus would make it possible for them to enjoy programming more. +I personally
HAWWE EXPERIENCED SOME MOVIES DONE IN THEATERS THAT WERE AUDIO DESCRIBED, VIDEOS
BORROWED WITH AUDIO DESCRIPTRION, ANDS STAGE PERFORMANCES THAT WERE AUDIO DESCRIBED
VIA SPECIAL RECEIVERS. IN EVERY SITUATION I FOUND MYSELF ON AN EQUAL LEVEL AND INFORMATION AS
MY SIGHTED FRIENDS.

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Anne Fesh

From: The Rabbit [white_rabbit2000@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 9:04 PM
To: INFO@ACB.ORG
Subject: i SUPPORT dvs

paul berthiaume
P. O. Box 17187, Main Street kStation
kWorcesterm, Massachusetts 01601-7187
(508) 795-1118

kI would like to lend my support to the kFederal kCommunications Commission proposeed Descriptive Video rules, MM document 99-339 which would request the movie industry ass well aas Television networks and Cable TV to include descriptive audio track to their programming and all movies. I am totally blind, and find that when I am alone watching television, it is not always possible for me to know what is going on on the screen. It is my belief and feeling that I should have the same privileges as those who are sighted to not only to understand what is happening when there is no dialogue, as to know emotional reactions facially etc. It enhances my own independence to be able to share with others following a film or other program some of the eventsa going on that were not part of the dialogue. It also frees up other members of my household from having to spend their time describing what is happening and thus would make it possible for them to enjoy programming more. +I personally
HAVWE EXPERIENCED SOME MOVIES DONE IN THEATERS THAT WERE AUDIO DESCRIBEDF,
VIDEOS BORROWWED WITH AUDIO DESCRIPTRION, ANDNS STAGE PERFORMANCES THAT WERE
AUDIO DESCRIBED VIA SPECIAAL RECEIVERS. iN EVERY SITUATION i FOUND MYSELF
ON AN EQUAL LEVEL AND INFORMATION AS MY SIGHTED FRIENDS.

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Anne Fesh

From: Diane Bomar [dbomar@primenet.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 11:56 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

Leedy Diane Bomar
2795 Tartan Lane
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Phone: (719) 590-7073

I support descriptive video and MM docket 99-339.

As a young child, I didn't watch cartoons because I couldn't figure out what was going on. I can remember watching "101 Dalmatians" when it was first released in the early '60s and not understanding that the high voices were those of the puppies. Especially children do not have the experience to deduce what is going on by context and speech alone in a audiovisual medium. As an adult, I enjoy all kinds of movies, but am limited to those that are not to action oriented, due to the lack of audio description or clues. Though I often go to the movie theater alone, there have been many occasions when attending a movie with a friend or family member, that people seated near us are offended by my companion's quiet description of scenes that I could not figure out. DVS would provide more access to independence.

Leedy Diane Bomar

Anne Fesh

From: Michael Byington [michael.byington@envisionus.com]
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 12:15 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'; 'ecfs@fcc.gov'; 'bkennard@fcc.gov'; 'sness@fcc.gov'; 'hfurchtg@fcc.gov';
'mpowell@fcc.gov'; 'gtristan@fcc.gov'
Cc: 'petersen@svpal.org'; 'japetersen@starpower.net'; 'dbmusic@cybernex.net';
'mjmandel@compuserve.com'
Subject: video discription

FRIENDS IN ART OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

REPLY TO:

Michael Byington, Vice President
909 S. W. College Ave.
Topeka, Kansas 66606

March 23, 2000

TO: THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC):

RE: DOCKET 99339 - REQUIREMENTS FOR VIDEO DESCRIPTION FOR
TELEVISION

COMMENTS COMPILED BY A COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF:

Mike Mandel, President
Jeaniece Petersen, Past President
Michael Byington, Vice President
Gordon Kent, Recording Secretary
Roger Petersen, Board Member

Friends In Art (FIA) of the American Council of the Blind (ACB) is a membership organization affiliated with the ACB. Our membership is comprised of blind performance, visual, and literary artists who practice their art on a professional or amateur basis; blind patrons of the arts interested in arts and esthetics access; and family, friends, and interested arts professionals who have a commitment to access in the arts and in the promotion and encouragement of blind artists.

The above purposes and missions give us ample interest in the areas of video description, descriptive video, audio description of video materials, and of this form of provision of access under any other title.

We want to commend the FCC for soliciting comments and considering rules with regard to this subject. It is an area of access which has long needed to be addressed.

We do believe that video description is an equivalent access accommodation to closed captioning. It is essential that the United States move forward with plans to make video description at least as prevalent as closed captioning.

We patently disagree with the comments of the National Federation of the Blind when they suggest that video description is not essential from the perspective of providing access to entertainment materials. The Federation seems to give unqualified support only for use of video description in terms of providing emergency information. While we might agree that an oncoming tornado or hurricane is more important than the color and cut of a period dress, or who did it in the most recent television mystery, we would like to avoid a situation where information access as it relates to entertainment is considered less an ultimate goal than

information access regarding news or emergencies. Blind Americans have a right to equally effective communications with regard to ALL information. We have, or will soon have, the technology to make the provision of such information available. It simply therefore should and must be done.

At the same time, we are reasonable advocates, and we understand the projections of time constraints and financial concerns voiced by the television industry. Perhaps 50 hours of weekly programming including the availability of video description within 18 months is a bit too ambitious to be accomplished by the industry. A phase-in, perhaps starting with prime time programming 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week (21 hours of programming per week) would be a better phase-in target, with the phase-in continuing to require increased duration within additional time

Also some of the smaller networks may not in fact have the technical capability to handle video description through the separate audio program (SAP) as quickly as the larger networks. There might be a slower phase-in of requirements for the smaller, more specialized networks.

Full compliance should be possible and should be mandated by the time the digital television standard is adopted, perhaps 2003. The ability to have several different SAP programs, as is provided through digital approaches, certainly makes logistics less complex.

While we are suggesting some reasonable revisions of the deadlines and a phase in of the mandates, make no mistake about the overall position of our organization. Video description must become a norm of television just as closed captioning has become a norm.

We must express surprise at the raising of Constitutional arguments by some of the commentators based on interpretations of the First Amendment. The concept seems to be that video description changes the nature of the artistic endeavor and therefore limits the freedom of speech of the artist or artists who created the original product. Video description is voluntary. The SAP channel can be turned on or off depending on whether the audio description track is desired. Video description does not change the nature of the initial art product. Video description provides simply a style of presentation of the art work. It is no different than the physical surroundings of a museum which may be presenting a show of fine master paintings. The environment makes a difference in the perception and enjoyment of the art, but the environment does not become the art.

The valid Constitutional argument is that several court decisions have made it clear that blind or other communications disabled individuals should not expect to experience less equally effective communications accommodations based on the purpose or content of those communications. To cause such a situation when the technology and means exists to remedy it is to cause undue censorship of materials to which the blind need access. Such censorship is quite clearly a violation of the First Amendment.

We are also concerned that the FCC has not addressed issues of access with regard to equipment design as it relates to accessible controls allowing blind Americans to activate the SAP feature on modern television sets, and access other menu driven features necessary to benefit fully from new, and particularly digital, television design. If the SAP is to be essential in choosing to use or not use video description, then blind people must readily have access to operate SAP related television controls. Non-talking, on screen menus do not allow for such access. These issues are not fully addressed through Section 255 of the Telecommunications Act. Not all television functions are considered to be a product of

telecommunications.

Band width and SAP allocations, as digital is developed, must make certain that there is adequate room for video description. More profitable uses of the SAP should not be allowed to squeeze out access accommodations such as video description.

In our discussion with some of our members who are blind performance artist, we are informed that these individuals depend on descriptions of clothing, style, and demeanor of television performers in order to know what is in vogue, what is within acceptable limits of behavior, what is selling, etc. Any person who is blind and who is attempting to blend well in to the society of our country must learn details concerning snapshots of what the mainstreamed press and entertainment media consider to be societal norms. For sighted individuals, right or wrong, good or bad, television is one of the most active exponents of these social facts and consequences. Blind Americans are asking for equal access, nothing more. As video description can be implemented and media part of our culture, requirements must be in place to make this happen. The requirements can be reasonable. They can take into account the small, new, struggling network. They can take into account that the development of the digital television standard may be intrinsic to full implementation of descriptive video. The goal an the overall path, however, must be one of moving ever closer to total access and total assurance of the provision of equally effective communications with regard to ALL types of communications.

FIA also feels that as the video description development and rulemaking process moves forward, it will be essential for the FCC to go beyond the solicitation of comments. FIA recommends that the FCC also establish an advisory body consisting of blind and visually impaired media savvy professionals and consumers to advise regularly throughout the development process. □

Anne Fesh

From: Frank Welte [fwelte@crl.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 3:06 PM
To: info@acb.org
Cc: acb-l@telepath.com
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Frank Welte. I am a blind American writing in support of the FCC's proposed rules requiring limited availability of descriptive video services, MM Docket No.99-339.

Deaf Americans have had the privilege of receiving closed caption television broadcasts for nearly a generation. Since our society has deemed it appropriate that deaf persons should have access to the audio component of television broadcasts it stands to reason that vision impaired persons should have access to the visual component of television broadcasts.

The arguments in opposition to the provision of descriptive video services by television broadcasters are notable only for their lack of substance.

Some opponents of DVS claim that it is prohibitively expensive. I have read that it costs about \$5,000 to add descriptions to a motion picture. In other words, it would cost producers of nationally broadcast television programs less than a penny per person per episode to make their programs (both the audio and video components) available to the millions of Americans with vision impairments. Public Television stations around the country have been providing DVS for years. If non-profit TV stations can afford to do this certainly profit-making stations and networks can do the same.

Some might argue that expanding DVS isn't technically possible. Again, the 10-year history of DVS usage by PBS exposes that lie for what it is.

Some misguided first amendment advocates claim that adding descriptions to programs would violate the free speech of their creators. I suppose this would be true if the creators of these programs deliberately chose to delete verbal descriptions of action scenes with the avowed purpose of preventing blind viewers from knowing what was going on on screen. Call me naive, but I doubt that anybody in the motion picture and television industry really wants to shut blind folks out of their programs. Some might say that the verbal descriptions could give blind viewers a distorted picture of the visual content of programs. If that is really a concern of the program creators they can simply write their own verbal descriptions into their screen play scripts. Their failure to do so would simply indicate that they trusted third party describers to provide accurate descriptions. If these producers really cared about whether blind folks got the correct interpretations of the visual portions of their works they'd support the use of audio descriptions prepared by trained describers rather than making us rely on the limited descriptive talents of parents, spouses, siblings, or friends as we must do at present.

Finally, I have heard that one group, the National Federation of the Blind, has falsely claimed that the blind community has little interest in DVS. As far as I know, the NFB hasn't surveyed the blind community on its feelings on this issue. They certainly never asked me about this issue. While the position of the NFB may reflect the views of its members this organization constitutes less than 10 percent of the blind population in America. Another large organization of blind people, the American Council of the Blind, strongly supports DVS. These claims that blind people aren't interested in described television remind me of the old excuses about wheelchair ramps and elevators being unnecessary in certain places of public accomodation because people in wheelchairs didn't visit those particular places. If your television came without a picture tube you might be less than enthusiastic about this evening's prime-time shows, but you'd change your mind once your set was repaired. After a half century blind Americans

have waited long enough for the TV repair person to call.

Frank Welte
1432 San Carlos Ave. #6
San Carlos, CA 94070-2205
Phone: (650)508-8329
E-mail: fwelte@crl.com

Anne Fesh

From: paise@earthlink.net
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 8:24 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support the FCC proposed ruling for descriptive video.

Samantha Thomas
POB 729
Pine Level, NC 27568

I am blind and I support the FCC proposed ruling for descriptive video, MM
Docket #99-339.

I would really appreciate having the same opportunity to enjoy television
that the deaf community has had for the last 20-plus years.

Samantha Thomas

GDF-GRADS: Guide Dog Handlers making a difference
<http://www.paisleyplace.com/gdf-grads/>

There is one quality which one must possess to win, and that is
definiteness of purpose, the knowledge of what one wants, and a burning
desire to possess it.

-Napoleon Hill

Anne Fesh

From: mary f short [shortmary@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 7:09 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am Mary Frances Short, 1135 Battery Lane, Nashville, TN 37220. I am a high-school teacher at Tennessee School for the Blind. I do support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

shortmary@juno.com

Anne Fesh

From: Joseph Perry [jcpperry@lazerlink.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 6:44 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video on television.

Joseph Perry
1224 16th Ave.
Altoona, 16601
814-944-4217

I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video, Docket MM No.99-339. I do not accept from industry, broadcasters, or any others who have to do with television production that description for the blind cannot be done. It is being done by PBS and certain movie theaters. So, why can't it be done on commercial television. I think it's only fair that blind people have the same rights as their sighted peers in this regard. I know that there are a lot of other blind and visually impaired individuals who feel the same as I do about this matter.

3/15/2000

Anne Fesh

From: Kristal Hagemoser-Platt [kplatt@unmc.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 12:21 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

March 15, 2000

Dear Secretary of the Federal Communications Commission:

On behalf of the Greater Omaha Chapter of the American Council of the Blind of Nebraska, I am writing to voice our support for the Federal Communications Commission proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. We are members of a consumer advocacy organization, comprised primarily of blind and visually impaired persons. We are committed to improving the living conditions of blind and visually impaired individuals by promoting our independence and effective participation as citizens in all aspects of society.

We feel strongly that video description is needed for ALL programming not just what other people think we should know. Please continue to work to ensure our full access to television programming.

Sincerely,

Kristal Platt, M.S.
President
Greater Omaha Chapter
American Council of the Blind of Nebraska
PO Box 335 DTS
Omaha NE 68101

Anne Fesh

From: Kristal Hagemoser-Platt [kplatt@unmc.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 11:59 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. As a blind woman I need the information from television programming made accessible for me to participate fully in society. The information that other people take for granted is not available to me. For instance, if I need information such as a phone number, sports scores, and weather warnings, I currently need a sighted person to read it to me; this is NOT satisfactory.

Thank you for the efforts you have made to make the proposed rules cover the needs of the blind and visually impaired.

Sincerely,

Kristal Platt, M.S.
2609 S 50 St
Omaha NE 68106

Anne Fesh

From: K M Lyons [khaki@wzrd.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 11:07 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

I am legally blind. I am writing in support of the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

These proposed rules would bring equal access to viewers with visual impairment.

Kathleen M Lyons
29 Rand Ave.
Buffalo, N Y 14216-3314
(716) 873 0001
e-mail khaki@wzrd.com

Anne Fesh

From: Ralph Manganiello [rmanganiello@envisionus.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 10:57 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

I support descriptive video's for people who are blind or visually impaired. Reference FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. I am visually impaired.

Ralph Manganiello
413 N. Knight
Wichita, KS 67203

Anne Fesh

From: Sheehan, Jane C [jane.sheehan@mail.va.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 8:33 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: FW: I support video description

-----Original Message-----

From: Sheehan, Jane C
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 7:44 AM
To: 'info@acbb.org'
Subject: I support video description

I am writing to support the FCC proposed rules on video description (docket no. MM99339).

I have always loved video description, whether on television or on movies, and find it much easier to follow the action. It is totally frustrating for a blind person to spend a half an hour to an hour (or even up to two hours for a movie) and find that the end of the program is totally visual.

Jane Sheehan
14311 Astrodome Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20906-2245
(301) 598-2131 Home
((202) 273-8381 work
E-Mail: jcsheehan@smart.net

Anne Fesh

From: Stephen Patterson [jsp@sabvi.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 10:48 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dennis Steiner, Vice President/COO
Susquehanna Association for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Lancaster, PA

On behalf of 55 blind employees, of whom I am one, I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Gary McLaughlin [garym@saturn.caps.maine.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 10:29 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Descriptive Video

As a member of ACB of Maine I Gary McLaughlin, PO BOX 2311, Bangor, Me. 04402-2311 support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket NO. 99-339. Thank you.

Gary L. McLaughlin
Independent Living Regional Manager
North Central Maine

Anne Fesh

From: Rob Gallo [groovepapa@mindspring.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:17 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Rob Gallo.
I live in St. Petersburg Florida, and I am blind.
I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive
video MM Docket No.99-339.
The NFB definitely does not speak on my behalf in this matter.
Rob Gallo,
The Groove Papa
"Life ain't nothing but a good groove"

Anne Fesh

From: R Chaffin [chaffin@ruraltel.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:33 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: FCC DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

Dear FCC Personnel,

As a member of the blind community, I would like to support MM Docket No. 99-339 which would require descriptive video as a means of making television programming accessible to myself and others of the blind and visually impaired community. I have watched movies where the action was described and found the movies to be much more meaningful and understandable.

Thank you,

Robert Chaffin
1105 Centennial Blvd.
Hays, KS 67601

Anne Fesh

From: Ron Jalbert [rjalber@attglobal.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 10:06 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am an advocate for the blind and have several friends who are blind and who would enjoy having access to current information and entertainment now available to the general public.

Ronald Jalbert
61 Canterbury Drive
Parkersburg WV 26101-8051

Anne Fesh

From: Charles Cronin Jr. [charmacy@worldnet.att.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:57 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Support descriptive video

MaryEllen Cronin
Charles R. Cronin Jr.
339 Mulry Lane
Lawrence, NY 11559

Home (516) 374-6008
MaryEllen Work (718) 327-2809
Charles Work (516) 292-9000 Ext. 216

Dear Commissioners:

My husband Bob and I are both visually impaired. We are writing to advise you that we strongly support the position that you have taken regarding making descriptive video service available on television.

We are both aware that not all visually impaired people support your position. You may be asking yourselves why this is so? Well, it may help to shed some light on this situation when you remember that not all people choose to wear seat belts or bicycle helmets.

Please be aware that as the visual nature of programming becomes more pronounced, the more difficult it is for us to follow it. We are saddened to learn about the television industry's decision to oppose your initiative. It seems that they are not required to meet the same high standards that they set for everyone else. Thank you for having the courage to make television more accessible to us.

Respectfully,
Charles and MaryEllen Cronin

Anne Fesh

From: Kathy, Jim Strahan [jkstrahan@earthlink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 7:25 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Kathy Strahan.

2999 E. Bluebell AVE. Brea, CA. 92821

I support the FCC and their efforts to obtain DVS for those of us who are blind, like myself.

I would enjoy TV much more if I was able to have access to narration.

Kathy Strahan

Anne Fesh

From: Esther Levegnale [elevegnale@snet.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 7:40 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Re: MM Docket #99-339

My name is Esther Levegnale and I am totally blind. I have been an avid supporter of Descriptive Video from Day 1 and have enjoyed everything from movies to television documentaries on PBS.

I think it would be wonderful if television shows broadcast by major networks could be broadcast in Descriptive Video. I am totally against NFB's stand on this issue, as I feel that we as blind people deserve equal rights and access to all television shows that are broadcast. There are times when I'm "watching" a good movie, for example, on TV and can pretty much pick up what is going on, but there are certain scenes that are visual and if someone isn't there explaining it to me, I wouldn't know what was happening in a particular scene, so invariably I always have to query my coworkers to see if they watched the same show as I had. Sometimes I'm lucky, sometimes I'm not. I also enjoy a particular soap opera which I faithfully follow daily, recording the show and watch it when I return home from work. I would also like to keep up with some of the finer details on that show also, even though, for the most part, I'm able to grasp what is happening. I could go on and on listing examples of documentaries, news shows, sit-coms, docudramas, etc., but I think I have more or less made my point and stated my case.

The bottom line is: Access to all of us, and I totally support your stance on this situation. I hope we can all inundate the FCC with our opinions on this issue and fully support their helping us. We can't just sit back and let things happen. We cannot afford to be complacent and we all must ban together to make our feelings known.

Please consider my opinion and I grant permission to have it printed in any source or form you choose. I wish you well and if anything further needs to be done, I would be more than willing to help.

Sincerely,
Esther Levegnale
205 New Haven Avenue
Waterbury, CT 06708
(203) 753-5932 (Home)
(203) 573-6000 Ext. 5759 (office) (until 3:15 p.m., EST)
E-Mail: elevegnale@snet.net

Anne Fesh

From: Melanie Brunson [mbrunson@acb.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 8:18 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video.

I am a blind person who is very much in favor of the FCC's efforts to increase the number of tv programs that include descriptive video. In fact, I think this decision is long overdue!

Thank you for forwarding this message to the FCC for me.

Melanie Brunson

Anne Fesh

From: Morozwhite [Morozwhite@email.msn.com]

Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 8:35 PM

To: info@acb.org

Subject: I support descriptive video

Nicole White
8070 W. Russell Road #2003
Las Vegas, Nevada 89113

I am totally blind and totally support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM
Docket No.99-339.

The difference for me is great. I am also a member of the NFB but do not support their
opinion on DVS.

Morozwhite@msn.com

Anne Fesh

From: Don Bowmer, President [don@audio4authors.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 8:37 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support discriptive video

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing in support of FCC rules (MM Docket No.99-339), which would provide access to video programming for persons with visual impairments. Such programming has otherwise been denied.

As President and founder of Audio4Authors Production Co., and an individual who happens to be blind, I feel that it is important that our society begins taking the necessary steps to include all of its members in having the opportunity to obtain publicly disseminated information and programming. The technology to do this exists. In light of the industry's overall revenues, it can hardly be considered to be cost prohibitive, as has been suggested .

Just as the general public has at last caught on to the pleasure and enjoyment of audio books as a vehicle for entertainment and information, we, the blind, request the same access to general programming.

Finally, it should be noted that the National Federation for the Blind (NFB) does not accurately report its membership, and certainly does not reflect the views of most of America's six million visually-impaired citizens. It is ironic that these professional beggars, NFB, are suggesting that in this case they do not support access since they are well known among the blind community for openly begging for money and special accommodations when such benefits serves its leadership.

Please note that while I support the intent of this rule, I also support a gradual, reasonable implementation that would allow the identified companies and organizations a final opportunity to provide access voluntarily.

Truly yours,

Donald R. Bowmer, President
Audio4Authors Production Co.
2783 Warren St.
Eugene, OR 97405
(541) 485-1404
don@audio4authors.com

Anne Fesh

From: John A. Fleming [bj2kiowa@cdsnet.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 5:19 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

My name is John A. Fleming
My address is 999 Glenlyn Dr.
Williams, Or. 97544
Phone 541-846-6981
Email <bj2kiowa@cdsnet.net>

I am totally blind. I think that descriptive video is great for blind people.

I fully support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

sincerely

Blue Skies

John & The Kooky Guide Dog Kiowa
President, Oregon Council Of The Blind
mailto:bj2kiowa@cdsnet.net

Life has to be lived. That's all there is to it.
Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)

Growing Old is Inevitable; Growing Up is Optional.
Unknown

Anne Fesh

From: SirDave@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 5:07 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To: FCC, Washington

To whom it may concern,

I has come to my attention that there are groups trying to delay or eliminate the incorporation of descriptive video on broadcast TV.

My wife is visually impaired and I can attest to the benefit of DVS on public television programming. For her, DVS programing is all that she can watch and enjoy. In addition to my wife, my profession puts me in contact with hundreds of blind and visually impaired people every month, and I can say that if more DVS programing were available these people would be watching it.

Contrary to popular belief, the National Federation for the Blind represents only a small fraction of blind people. The largest segment of blind and visually impaired individuals are elderly and are not represented by any organized group. They are also not very aware of current technology and as such do not have a voice in the DVS debate. Because these people are more likely to live alone and have limited means of leaving the house DVS could be a very important part of their lives.

I urge you to make all broadcast video programming accessible to the blind and visually impaired.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David C. Fisichella
79 Queen Street
Falmouth, MA 02540
capevision@aol.com

Anne Fesh

From: Dlevine25@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 4:56 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

This refers to docket # 99-339

I have 2 blind siblings due to Retinitis Pigmentosa. Important informational sources, not to mention simple social events such as watching television or seeing a movie together are unavailable to them and us as a family due to the fact that readily available technology is not being utilized to help. I support descriptive video.

Thank you.

David Levine
45 Revere Court
Deerfield, IL 60015

Anne Fesh

From: Dan Rossi [drossi@transarc.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 1:13 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video"

Dan Rossi
5541 Ellsworth Ave. #1
Pittsburgh PA 15232

I am a totally blind individual and I have found the use of Descriptive Video to be both useful and enriching in my life. Thus I support the FCC's proposed rules for descriptive video, video MM Docket No.99-339.

Having done cost analyses for a manufacturing firm for several years, I understand the concern of protecting the bottom line. However, in a multi-billion dollar industry such as the entertainment industry I find it sad that the leaders are so short-sighted as to deny a not insignificant portion of the society this benefit.

As the baby boomers slide into their later years the complaint of missing what is going on on the screen will become more prevalent. Then the entertainment industry will have a much larger and much more powerful group of unhappy customers with which to deal. It is in the entertainment industry's best interest to accept this responsibility now rather than later.

Dan

Blue Skies
Dan Rossi
(412) 667-3634
drossi@transarc.com

Anne Fesh

From: Prime [kprime@suffolk.lib.ny.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 12:08 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Kathleen Prime, and I am a member of ACBNY/LI. I am totally blind. Thanks for informing all members about the FCC situation. As someone who is totally blind, I see a real need for descriptive video services in order to enhance our quality of life and give us equal access to the information that all other citizens have available to them. I think it is very inappropriate that NFB should presume that it speaks on behalf of all blind people. It may be the most influential organization of the blind in terms of financial status, but I can assure you that it does not speak for me or for my fellow ACB members! With descriptive video access, we are not asking for any special privileges. We are not seeking anything additional. We are only asking to have equal access to the same information that everyone else can appreciate and enjoy. NFB's pretentious claim that blind people are not interested in descriptive video makes us seem apathetic and helplessly dependent, rather than self-sufficient and aware of our rights as citizens. NFB, as well as the FCC, should be made aware that there are other stronger voices to be heard! My family members and sighted friends share my opinion on the value of descriptive video for blind and visually impaired people. I can only imagine how much information we miss by not having access to the visual side of television. Thank you for your continued efforts to inform and educate us about this matter.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Prime

Anne Fesh

From: Rick Alfaro [ralfaro@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 7:14 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Vides Service

My name is Rick Alfaro and would like to make it known that I do indeed support the use of DVS. I am totally blind and feel that Descriptive Video adds a whole new demension to my viewing experience, and makes it truly enjoyable. I fully support MM Docket No.99-339 which outlines the FCC proposed rules for the inclusion of the DVS format. My contact info is below.

Rick Alfaro
11051 S.W. 9th Pl.
Davie, fl 33324

Thank you.
--All the best,
-- Rick Alfaro
-- ralfaro@bellsouth.net

Anne Fesh

From: djc [djc@calweb.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 1:04 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Vidio

Don Coco
1961 Howe Ave, #37
Sacramento, Ca. 95825
Being Totally Blind I support Descriptive Video.
MM Docket No.99-339

<mailto:djc@calweb.com>

I C Q Number Is: 4781694

Anne Fesh

From: Sanfilippo, John [JSANFILIPPO@lighthouse.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 10:32 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support video description

As regards FCC MM Docket No.99-339,

I very much support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive
>>video.

"Call the number on your screen." is not very helpful when one cannot see
the screen.

John Sanfilippo
220-25 93rd Road
Queens Village, NY 11428

Anne Fesh

From: Amy Bower [abower@whoi.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 7:55 PM
To: info@acb.org
Cc: capevision@aol.com
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

To: FCC, Washington, DC

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in full support of Descriptive Video Service for television programming. I am legally blind, but I still enjoy watching television. My quality of life is greatly improved as a result of the entertainment and educational programming on television. Most of my viewing however is limited to public television, where Descriptive Video Service, or DVS, is most widely available. If that service did not continue, my enjoyment of these programs would diminish significantly, to the point where I would not watch them. I would like to have access to network television programs as well, and I therefore strongly support the expansion of DVS.

Thank you.
Dr. Amy Bower

Dr. Amy S. Bower
MS #21
Department of Physical Oceanography
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Woods Hole, MA 02543 USA
voice: 508-289-2781
fax: 508-457-2181
e-mail: abower@whoi.edu
<http://science.whoi.edu/users/abower>

Anne Fesh

From: Carol Cyr [ccyr@pcbvi.org]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 7:57 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

--Carol Cyr
Computer Instructor
Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
2470 El Camino Real, Suite 107
Palo Alto, CA 94306
U.S.A.

I'm not blind but I teach computers to the blind. I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Donna L Sanchez [dsanchez99@juno.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 8:54 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Donna L Sanchez I live at 27 Quail Hollow Dr, San Jose CA 95128-4528. I am leagely blind. I have Glaucoma. I fully support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No 99-339. Blind people are entitled to have access to all kinds of information just as sighted people are and by having this we will be able to have the same opportunity to enjoy programs and get information. So please I request that you support this and help us be equal like our sighted friends. Also this will make us more independent .
Thank you

Donna L Sanchez

Anne Fesh

From: MI Council of the Blind/MI [mcbvi@iserv.net]

Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 10:48 PM

To: info@acb.org

Subject: I support Descriptive Video

Rosemarie Facilla
2088 Parslow Dr. #133
Muskegon, MI 49442

I am totally blind and have enjoyed descriptive video. I would like to see descriptive video available on all national TV programming.

Anne Fesh

From: MI Council of the Blind/VI [mcbvi@iserv.net]

Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 11:02 PM

To: acb

Subject: I support Descriptive Video

Rachel Batenburg

1154 Langland

Muskegon, MI 49442

I am an elderly person and descriptive video is important to me.

Anne Fesh

From: MI Council of the Blind/VI [mcbvi@iserv.net]

Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 11:09 PM

To: acb

Subject: I support descriptive video

Gloria Martinez

369 Merrill Ave.

Muskegon, MI 49442

I enjoy watching and descriptive video makes this activity much more enjoyable.

Anne Fesh

From: MI Council of the Blind/VI [mcbvi@iserv.net]

Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 11:14 PM

To: acb

Subject: I support descriptive video

Caszine White

3020 Peck Street

Muskegon, MI 49444

I am an elderly blind person. Watching television is one of the activities I enjoy. Descriptive video opens this world to me again and makes this activity much more fulfilling.

Anne Fesh

From: Philip Hallford [philipha@concentric.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 2:59 AM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

FCC:
Philip Hallford
2965 Mission Blvd. Num. 3e
San Diego CA 92109.
I am totally blind and support the expanded use of descriptive video.
This can happen under "MM Docket number 99-339."

Anne Fesh

From: T M [The_Typist@webtv.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 3:43 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Need Help

Hi,

I am blind in my left eye and deaf in my left ear, among other disabilities. I find it difficult to find a good job and keep one when I do. I am looking for any advice or help that you may have.

Thank You in advance.

Anne Fesh

From: Charis Austin [charis@iserv.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 4:33 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Video Description

My name is Charis Austin, 2426 Thornwood, S.W., Wyoming, Michigan 49509. I am the Secretary of the Michigan Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind. This message relates to:

video MM Docket No.99-339.

On behalf of the members of the Michigan Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, I want to thank the members of the FCC for allowing blind people to become a fullpartner in the television arena. The Michigan Council of the Blind supports video description rules. The Descriptive Video Service is very important to us.

Charis Austin, Secretary
Michigan Council of the Blind

Anne Fesh

From: Byron Smith [byron@indiana.edu]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 9:54 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear FCC,

My name is Byron K Smith. I live at 4300 E. Morningside Drive in Bloomington, Indiana. My ZIP code is 47408-3149. I am totally blind.

I support your proposed rules for descriptive video (MM Docket No. 99-399).

I want to be a full partner in the national television experience. I cannot do that until description is included in television programming, when appropriate. I should not have to rely on sighted people to tell me what I'm missing when I watch TV. Deaf people have closed captioning as an accessibility service. I want to have descriptive video.

For several years descriptive video has been part of several series on PBS. It should be there on other networks and cable channels. With the arrival of digital TV, it is now much easier for descriptive video to exist.

Sincerely,

Byron K Smith

"All of us can truly be
Known for our abilities."

Byron K Smith, Producer
Division of Broadcast and Electronic Media
IU Office of Communications and Marketing
Phone: (812) 855-9323
E-mail: byron@indiana.edu
Fax: (812) 855-7002 -- ATTN Byron

Anne Fesh

From: arklab [arklab@prodigy.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 2:19 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

As director of an agency that works with hundreds of blind and visually impaired individuals, all ages, I can attest to the positive reception for descriptive video. The DVS videos through WGBH Boston, the descriptive motion pictures, the descriptive "live" theater offered in Boston, all of this has opened new areas of enjoyment for the blind. We hope that the television and cable industries will be encouraged to add descriptive to their programming so that all TV will be more accessible to the blind and visually impaired. Arthur Kelts, Lowell Association for the Blind, Lowell, MA

Anne Fesh

From: Parmenter, Bonnie [b_parmenter@hphood.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 2:37 PM
To: info
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am sending this for Martha Parmenter, 401 Essex Street, Apt 226, Beverly MA 01915. She is blind and supports the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No99-339.

Thank you for forwarding this to the appropriate person.

Anne Fesh

From: Ross Winetsky [winetsky@concentric.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 2:57 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To: FCC
March 20, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a vocational rehabilitation counselor and a musician who is blind. I support the measure for the FCC to increase and expand descriptive audio for video, across the board, on television. Although the blind community may be relatively small, the United States has committed to the community of people with disabilities, to make media accessible. Historically, creating greater access has helped increase profits for business. People who are blind purchase items, eat out and form opinions as do people with site. Descriptive video allows us to be an equal partner in the area of mass communication and entertainment.

I am aware that the National Federation of the Blind does not support this measure. It is unfortunate that they have taken this position because they represent only a portion of people who are blind. There are many blind people in this country who are not affiliated with any blind organizations who justifiably want to be a full participant in life in America.

I urge you to expand on descriptive audio for television.

Sincerely,
Ross Winetsky
198 North Cypress Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050
Telephone: 408 -- 615 -- 7677

Anne Fesh

From: Woody Anna Dresner [adresner@nbp.org]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 7:25 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing because I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. I have been blind since birth, and have found audio descriptions helpful and informative when they have been available. Descriptions have enhanced my knowledge of our culture and the world in general by providing information I would otherwise not have had access to. They are also very helpful to people with learning disabilities, who cannot read the captions which accompany programs such as documentaries and convey useful information.

I applaud your efforts to promote video description.

Sincerely,
Anna Dresner
Publishing Associate
National Braille Press

3833 Dalewood Ave., SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
319 247-1411

Anne Fesh

From: Suzie M Yost [s-yost@juno.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 7:30 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Suzie from New Orleans, La. I'm blind and feel having descriptive video on television would make it a lot more interesting and easy to follow. Many times I find it takes so much concentration to follow a movie I just turn it off. Therefore, I support descriptive video under "mm docket number 99-339" Thanks.

Anne Fesh

From: Margo Volterra [mnv@world.std.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 7:53 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear ACB,

As one who is "Sight Afflicted" (sighted), I am writing to support descriptive video for two basic reasons.

1. I like having the added description. Not only does it augment and *enhance my viewing (as even sighted folks do miss things)* it also allows me to multi-task and not feel I have to keep my eyes glued on the screen.
2. It cuts down on my having to interpret for my significant other, who is blind.

Sincerely,
Margo Volterra

Anne Fesh

From: Diane Dobson [dobson@islandnet.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 8:21 PM
To: Info@acb.org
Subject: DVS

I support discriptive video as a blind person feel it would make my life more interesting.

<Diane Dobson - Have an accessable day>
<Coming: From an Island in the Pacific>

Anne Fesh

From: Debbie C. Grubb [debbiec@concentric.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 10:17 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Debbie Grubb
2325 Elliston Place
Apartment 408
Nashville, TN 37203
Phone: (615) 321-2390
E-Mail: debbiec@concentric.net

I am an American who is blind. Since I have known the mind and heart opening joys of video description for over a decade now, it is my honor to write in support of the FCC's proposed rules requiring limited availability of descriptive video services, MM Docket No.99-339.

Americans with hearing impairments have had the liberating privilege of viewing closed caption television broadcasts for 20 years. Closed captioning is now as much a part of the world of television as are advertising and credits.

The need of individuals who are blind and severely visually impaired to access the visual component of television broadcasts equals the need of individuals with hearing impairments to access the audio component of these programs.

Imagine opening an unexpected package. Beneath all the protective tissue paper, you find a beautifully leather bound first edition of your most beloved novel. Further imagine your dismay to see only dialogue. All the flawlessly painted scenes, costumes, movements, looks, body language exchanges and little actions that are momentous to the movement of the story have been excised and thrown into a recycle bin from which nothing can ever be recovered. Imagine your anticipation as the time draws near for your favorite star to appear in a brand new show, or the start of your favorite sports playoff or your need to know if a severe weather watch might effect you or your loved ones. Your television set sounds forth in fantastic living stereophonic sound; but the picture that finds its way behind your eyes is a blur equalling nothingness. Without the kindness of family and friends who are sometimes available and often are not, this is the scenario that we as people who are visually impaired face every day.

The fiscal notes attached to closed captioned, video described motion pictures and the programs that National Public Television has broadcast with both closed captioning and video description prove that it costs less than a penny per person per episode to make both the audio and video components) of broadcasts available to the millions of Americans who will benefit from them.

Is not the purpose of television to communicate information via sound and picture? Is it not often the case that television gives credence to the old adage, "A picture is worth a thousand words? Give to us access to the pictures as you have given to individuals who are hearing impaired access to the words. Although interpretation is involved in the portraying of pictures to those of us who cannot interpret them for ourselves in a way

that printing the spoken word is not, do not the unspoken mandates of both art and television to communicate make this necessary pictorial word painting essentially fair and right?

Anne Fesh

From: Koors, Don J [DKoors@fssa.state.in.us]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 3:08 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: we support descriptive video

Dear FCC Members:

We support the action you have already taken in reference to "descriptive video." We do understand that some individuals and/or organizations oppose "descriptive video" either for a person reason or because they think it is too costly and/or not needed.

Individuals who have not experienced sight loss can not appreciate the value of "descriptive video." The added cost to provide this additional service is minimal in cost when compared to the total cost. Individuals who are deaf or heard of hearing now have captioning available to them. As individuals who are legally blind, why shouldn't we have "descriptive Video" available to us?

We support the FCC's proposed rules for "descriptive video", MM Docket No. 99-339. It is our hope that you will make a positive decision in reference to this valuable service on behalf of the individuals who do not have enough vision to fully enjoy the programming without "descriptive video." If you should need additional information from us, we await your request.

Don Koors, legally blind
Gerry Koors, totally blind
5885 North Central Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46220-2509
Ph. (317) 251-2562.

Anne Fesh

From: Arlene Cohen [arlene@en.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 3:38 PM
To: ACB National
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear Sir:

I am blind and enjoy watching TV after a hard day at work. It would be much more enjoyable if I could tell what action was being seen by all the "sighted " TV watchers.

Please help me to have the same access to information as you do. Please support MM Docket 99-339.

Thank you for your support,

Arlene Cohen
1306 Giesse Drive
Mayfield Hts., Ohio 44124

Anne Fesh

From: Anderson, Katrina L [KAnderson@fssa.state.in.us]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 3:43 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

* Katrina Anderson
* 4317B Malden Ct.
* Beech Grove, IN 46107
* March 22, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

* I am writing to express my support of the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. I am totally blind, and live alone. As a result, I do not have sighted assistance when watching television.

*
* Television is an extremely important part of my life. Of course it serves as a major form of entertainment, but it also provides an enormous amount of information. The latter is extremely relevant since I cannot access newspapers and the like. However, I will never know how much information has been denied to those of us who do not have the benefit of vision. Please help enrich the lives of the visually impaired individuals of our country by providing descriptive narration on network television.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration!
Katrina Anderson

Anne Fesh

From: Arlene Cohen [arlene@en.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 3:48 PM
To: ACB National
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Dear Sirs:

I am blind and enjoy many TV programs. Many times, it's hard for me to understand what is happening because there is silence . If the programs were described, I would be able to enjoy the action just as much as you do.

Please support and hurry along MM Docket 99-339. I am looking forward to many more video described programs.

Thank you so much,

Lillian Sego
6755 Mayfield Road #721
Mayfield Hts., Ohio 44124

Anne Fesh

From: JoChisnell [JoChisnell@email.msn.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 7:46 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Mary Jo and Stevan Chisnell
738 Edgewood Rd.
Richmond Heights Ohio 44143

Mary Jo is blind, and I am visually impaired. Descriptive Video allows us to enjoy movies, plays, and television shows. We strongly support the FCC rule making in reference to described video, MM Docket No. 99 - 339.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Steve and Jo Chisnell

Anne Fesh

From: Hodge Charles [hodge-charles@dol.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 6:48 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: FW: I support discriptive video services:

From: Hodge Charles
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 6:43 PM
To: 'info@acb.,org'
Subject: I support discriptive video services:

My name is Charles Hodge, and I presently live at 1131 South Forest Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22204. I am a blind adult citizen who enjoys watching and listening to movies and a wide variety of television programming. I am here commenting on the Federal Communication Commission's proposed rule on descriptive video services, mm docket No. 99-339. Despite the misguided contentions of the National Federation of the Blind who do not speak for this blind American, I wholeheartedly support the spirit and intent of the fcc's proposed rule. As the digital age in television broadcasting is dawning upon us, it is clear that a broader and richert tapestry of broadcasting options lies immediately ahead of us. The proposed rule begins by establishing a modest requirement for dvs equipped broadcasts while indicating that the dvs requirement may be increased in phased in steps in the future. This balanced phased-in approach fits well with the legitimate television broadcast accessibility needs of the blind and visually impaired community when balanced against the ever changing conditions in the television broadcasting arena. I hope in closing that the fcc will move ahead to promptly finalize this important proposed rule regarding descriptive video services. Respectfully submitted, Charles Hodge

Anne Fesh

From: Robert Rogers [rrrogers@one.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 7:40 PM
To: info@acb.org
Cc: k8co@one.net
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

I thank the FCC for its position on descriptive video. I urge the FCC to continue its stand and ask that it will see to the inclusion of provisions for descriptive video in the scheme of digital television.

I, myself, derive enjoyment and satisfaction from television programs even though I am totally blind. However, I am having more and more difficulty understanding whole segments of programs. Frequently, I will get involved with watching a movie and get very frustrated because the ending is totally visual making it impossible for me to understand just what happened. I will explain by giving an example. I frequently enjoy a rather well done series, JAG, on CBS. The episode shown on March 21, 2000, is an example of which I speak. It was enjoyable until the conclusion of the episode. Even though I am blind, I could more or less follow the story until the last two or three minutes. At that time, I completely lost it because only a sighted person could understand how the story finished. I watch that episode for almost an hour, wasted almost an hour, because the conclusion was accessible only to a sighted watcher. I was furious because I wanted to know how it worked out and could not. Descriptive video would have made that possible.

More and more, there are millions of low vision and legally blind people who are denied access to information and entertainment because of the way television is getting even more visual in nature. There was a time that one could understand through the dialog. The population of the U.S. is aging and with that aging, there will be more with low vision or blindness. With this aging population, people are also living much longer. Are we to ignore these numbers and say, "sorry, but you people are just going to have to find some other source of information and entertainment, or maybe you can get a friend or neighbor or somebody... to come over and explain it to you."

Inclusion of descriptive video in the scheme of television, in my view, is imperative. There are those who contend that descriptive video would be prohibitively expensive, but when balanced against the massive revenue derived from television productions, it would amount to only pennies to the entertainment industry. The technology already exists to make it possible. We cannot ignore millions of citizens because the television industry does not want to go to the trouble of working out the details. The industry did it for captioned video for the deaf. Now let the industry do likewise for descriptive video for low vision and legally blind audiences.

Robert Rogers
1121 Morado Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45238
Phone: (513) 921-3186 (home), (513) 762-4022 (work)

Anne Fesh

From: Mary Hiland [maryhila@gcfn.org]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 7:43 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support video description

I am very grateful for the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video, MM Docket no. 99-339. Finally, I will be able to experience the benefits of television, just as my fellow sighted Americans do. Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,
Mary Hiland
439 Canterwood Ct.
Gahanna OH 43230

Mary Hiland <maryhila@freenet.columbus.oh.us>

Anne Fesh

From: Enoch Todd [enoch@netdotcom.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 8:50 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: FCC Rules for Video Description

I strongly support the minimal requirements for video description currently proposed by the Federal Communications Commission.

Enoch Todd
360 Trumbull Avenue SE
Warren, OH 44483
E-mail: enoch@netdotcom.com

Anne Fesh

From: Ray and Karyn Campbell [farmboy@concentric.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 5:30 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Ray Campbell
460 Raintree Ct., #3K
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

I am totally blind and I support requiring Video Description in television programming as proposed in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, MM Docket #99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Kathy Blackburn [kblackbn@concentric.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 5:46 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support video description

8607 Delaware Court
Austin, TX 78758

My name is Kathy Blackburn; I am totally blind. I support the Federal Communications Commission's notice of proposed rulemaking regarding descriptive video, MM Docket No.99-339. Thanks to video description, I understand why Casablanca is the best film ever made.

Sincerely,
Kathy Blackburn
kblackbn@concentric.net

Anne Fesh

From: Roger D. Petersen [petersen@svpal.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 5:58 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: We support Descriptive Video

Date: Mon, 20 Mar 2000 17:26:45 -0800
To: ecfs@fcc.gov
From: Pam Brandin <pbrandin@pcbvi.org>
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video Services
Cc:
Bcc:

Dear Chairman Kennard and Members of the FCC:

I am writing on behalf of Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Palo Alto, California, in support of descriptive video services to make television programs accessible to people who are unable to see them because of blindness or visual impairment.

Our agency was founded on the conviction that sight loss need not be a barrier to self-reliance or self-esteem, and our services to 1,000 people annually enable them to achieve their highest potential for independence in the sighted community. Being able to access the information, education, and entertainment programs on television is of great importance in achieving self-reliance, self-esteem, and independence.

> More than half of our clients are over the age of 60 and the majority of these older individuals have lost their vision due to the process of aging. They are often isolated, lonely, and depressed. They, and the other younger individuals who may be better able to participate more fully in the community, would benefit greatly by having the ability to hear what those of us who are sighted can see on television.

I urge you to move forward with requirements for increased descriptive programming on television.

Sincerely,
Pam Brandin, Executive Director
Peninsula Center for the Blind
and Visually Impaired

Anne Fesh

From: peterpar@pacbell.net
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 6:52 PM
To: info@acb.org
Cc: peter_pardini@ci.sf.ca.us
Subject: I support descriptive video

TO: FCC

From: Peter A. Pardini
267 Cardinal Road
Mill Valley, CA 94941

I am legally blind and I support the actions of the FCC for the proposed descriptive video rules under MM docket number 99-339.

Through the use of descriptive videos my enjoyment of television has increased. I only wish more television program were described.

Anne Fesh

From: MARGUERITE NETTLES [maggieskitchenkorner@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 10:54 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: fcc- descriptive video

-I support descriptive video.. There are many programs on tv i cannot enjoy because i do not understand what is happening. I do not subscribe to cable for this reason. I support mm docket 99-339 in favor of descriptive video

my name is Marguerite Nettles, 702 w. lily ave, McHenry, il. 60050.

I am visually impaired

Do You Yahoo!?

Talk to your friends online with [Yahoo! Messenger](#).

Anne Fesh

From: MARGUERITE NETTLES [maggieskitchenkorner@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 11:03 PM

To: info@acb.org

Subject: DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

MY WIFE IS BLIND AND I SUPPORT DOCKETT 99-339 IN FAVOR OF DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO. IF THE PROGRAMS I WATCH WERE IN DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO SHE COULD ENJOY THEM AS I AND ANY NORMALLY SIGHTED PERSON CAN.

CHARLES NETTLES

702 W. LILY AVE

MCHENRY, IL.60050

Do You Yahoo!?

Talk to your friends online with [Yahoo! Messenger](#).

Anne Fesh

From: MARGUERITE NETTLES [maggieskitchenkorner@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 10:58 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

WE BOTH SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO. MM DOCKET 99-339 IN FAVOR

WE OWN MANY VIDEO DESC. MOVIES AND WE WOULD ENJOY TV MORE IS THEIR
WERE MORE DESCRIBED MOVIES WE ARE BOTH BLIND

ROGER AND DONNA DAWSON, 3138 N. LAWNSDALE, CHICAGO ILL. 60618

Do You Yahoo!?

Talk to your friends online with [Yahoo! Messenger](#).

Anne Fesh

From: Berl Colley [blc0901@uswest.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 11:22 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: discriptive video

I want to support the efforts on behalf of discriptive Video. I like the documentories and the discription give me a greater understanding of the video.

Berl Colley
President
Washington Council of the blind

Anne Fesh

From: Bill Gallik [wfg@elnet.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 11:59 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video



Bill Gallik.vcf

In reply to a call to action by the American Council of the Blind I am posting this message so that it might be printed and forwarded to the FCC.

I am blind and strongly support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. I lost all of my vision in 1995 and since then have basically "tuned out" television because I just don't get much out of it. This is not because I do not want to enjoy the entertainment provided by television broadcasts, it is just that I find myself getting frustrated with the inability to follow what is happening on screen.

If Descriptive Video were available on commercial broadcasts I would certainly "tune back in." I do own a TV with the SAP feature and do enjoy the PBS broadcasts as well the Turner broadcasts that include Descriptive Video Service.

Also, in reply to the objections raised by industry I would like to remind that the commercial airways are granted as a "gift" to those commercial interests. The broadcast bandwidth used by this industry could just as easily be allocated to other industries if that were the public will. This is not intended to be threatening, it is merely making the point that this industry is operating in an environment that was granted to them as a non-cost resource of their business. As such there is an obligation on this industry to serve the public to the fullest plausible extent.

Thank You,

Sincerely,

William F. Gallik
414 S. Aurora Way
Wheaton, IL. 60187

Anne Fesh

From: Sterling Guidry [wb5wpg@juno.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 2:23 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support descriptive Video

I support Descriptive Video "MM Docket 99-339".
i am blind.
sterling Guidry
825 1/2 Weiblen Place
New Orleans, Louisiana 70124

YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH FOR THE INTERNET!
Juno now offers FREE Internet Access!
Try it today - there's no risk! For your FREE software, visit:
<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/tagj>.

Anne Fesh

From: jean christy [jeanc@vlrw.org]
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 10:37 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: MM Docket #99-339

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in regards to the FCC decisions being made about audio described programming, MM Docket #99-339.

It is my understanding that you are forwarding comments to the FCC. If this is the case please do so with this e-mail.

Audio described programming in television and movies would allow persons who are blind and visually impaired the opportunity to independently view more of the infinite number of movies and programs that have become such an integral part of our society. At this time persons who are blind are dependent on a willing friend or family member to describe non verbal information.

I am legally blind myself and work with blind and visually impaired persons and view this decision as an equal access issue. As in other access issues it would also be a change that would expand a great deal as the baby boomers age and more of them become visually impaired. I have also heard people with normal vision say that they appreciated the audio description they had seen in some video tapes in certain movies it helped them better understand exactly what was going on in a scene.

Please note that there is not one organization that speaks for all people who are blind. That like political parties the majority of persons who are blind do not belong to any particular organization.

Sincerely,
Jean Christy

Anne Fesh

From: Pamela Loch [pamlteach@dellnet.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 8:27 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Pamela Loch. My address is
11 Marshall Ave. Hopkinton, MA. 01748.
I am blind and I support the FCC proposed
rules for descriptive video - MM Docket
No. 99-339.

----- Original Message -----

From: Jerry Berrier <berrier@banet.net>
To: Sharon Strzalkowski <strzal@bicnet.net>; Sharon Latka-Davis
<latkadav@aol.com>; Pam Loch <PamLTeach@dellnet.com>; Larry Raymond
<raymond1@ci.worcester.ma.us>; Judy Savageau <Judith.Savageau@umassmed.edu>;
George McDermott <profrev@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 7:30 PM
Subject: Fw: PCB desscriptive Video alert

>
> I hope you will all respond to this message from ACB--Jerry
>
>
> THE BATTLE FOR DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO IS JOINED!
>
> After many years of struggle by those of us in the American
> Council of the Blind and our allies in the effort to get equal
> access to television programming, the day has come when all in
> the blind community who care about and want descriptive video on
> the programs we want to watch, must stand up and be counted.
> Here's what is going on and what all of us need to do.
>
> The Federal Communications Commission has issued proposed
> rules to require increasing amounts of descriptive video on
> television. Over time, this would afford blind people expanding
> access to television programming much in the same way that our
> friends in the deaf community now enjoy closed captioning.
>
> ACB and our allies have gotten our rights to information
> access to this point through our advocacy and testimony to the
> FCC in support of the proposed rules. Now, and despite the clear
> value of descriptive video to our blindness community, come the
> attacks.
>
> The Motion Picture Association, the National Association of
> Broadcasters, DirectTV, the Cable TV Association, a handful of
> smaller entities, and sadly, the National Federation of the
> Blind, have all come out against our rights to have equal access
> to the programming that is offered to the public on television.
> Why is this?
>
> The people from industry say it cannot be done
> technologically, it costs too much for far too few people, and it
> infringes on their first amendment rights of freedom of speech.
> Irrespective of what might have been in the mind of NFB,
> unfortunately, the Federation has played right into the hands of
> industry by saying that blind people are fairly indifferent to
> descriptive video, it should not be mandatory, and that only news
> and emergency information should be required if anything at all.
>

> The objections of industry were easily anticipated. the
> same kind of whining and moaning happened when deaf folks went
> for closed captioning. These arguments can and are being roundly
> refuted by experts on our side who have plenty of ammunition to
> combat these flimsy excuses from business interests who are more
> concerned about their already generous bottom lines, rather than
> blind persons having access to the same information as anyone
> else. However, industry has already made a point that they have
> seen the NFB objections and plan to use them in furthering their
> own cause.

> What is the FCC to do when industry points out that the
> blind folks don't want descriptive video because an organization
> that claims to be the largest in the country has said so in black
> and white? How should the FCC react to industry pointing out
> that they would be more than happy to look at this issue as a
> voluntary one as suggested by NFB, when in the 15 years of
> descriptive video there have been precious few industry
> renderings beyond the great work of PBS? What should the FCC do
> when NFB holds itself out as the voice of the blind?

> Clearly, the FCC knows that NFB is hardly the sole
> representative of the blind, but it is critical that all of us
> let the FCC know that we in the blindness community care about
> and want very much to have access to television programming
> through descriptive video.

> This is not a time for simply sending around alerts. All
> blind people must communicate that we matter, that we want
> descriptive video, and the FCC must not allow the prattling of
> industry and misguided priorities of the Federation to cloud the
> real issue of access to what almost every other American takes
> for granted. We must thank the Federal Communications Commission
> for their standing up for our simple request to be a full partner
> in the national experience of television and encourage them to
> stay the course in the face of those who would deny us our
> rightful enjoyment of what is offered to the public.

> Irrespective of whether we belong to any particular
> organization or not, we all must communicate with the FCC on
> behalf of descriptive video. Here are some options on how to do
> it.

> * We can send e-mail to the ACB internet information
> address where it can be printed and forwarded to the FCC. All
> should make the subject line "I support descriptive video" and
> ACB can filter the mail to the printer in that way. All messages
> should be sent to info@acb.org and include in the body of the
> message the writer's name, address and the fact that he or she
> is blind and supports the FCC proposed rules for descriptive
> video MM Docket No.99-339.

> * We can also post e-mail directly to the FCC by a form
> that can be gotten from them by sending an email to ecfs@fcc.gov,
> and include the following words without the quotes in the body of
> the message, "get form <e-mail address>." Then a sample form and
> directions will be sent in reply.

> * We can also send regular mail to the Secretary of the
> Federal Communications Commission with the writer's name and
> address and the fact that he or she is blind and supports the
> proposed descriptive video rules under MM docket number 99-339.
> Letters should be postmarked before March 21 and mailed to:
> Magalie Roman Salas,
> Office of the Secretary,
> Federal Communications Commission,
> 445 Twelfth Street, S.W., TW-A325,

> Washington, D.C. 20554.
>
> * To reach a staff member of the FCC in Washington, call
> between 8:00 AM and 5:30 PM eastern time to area code
> (202)418-0190. The people at this number may be able to direct
> calls to an appropriate person. Remember the MM Docket Number
> 99-339.
>
> The choice is ours to make. Either we let the FCC know that
> video description is important to us as a blind community or we
> allow industry to continue making the same old excuses and
> justifying it all by quoting the Federation.
>
>
> -----
> To Post a message, send it to: pcb-1@eGroups.com
> To Unsubscribe, send a blank message to: pcb-1-unsubscribe@eGroups.com
>
> -----
> Special Offer-Earn 300 Points from MyPoints.com for trying @Backup
> Get automatic protection and access to your important computer files.
> Install today:
> http://click.egroups.com/1/2344/2/_/187078/_/952982412/
>
> -- Talk to your group with your own voice!
> -- <http://www.egroups.com/VoiceChatPage?listName=pcb-1&m=1>
>
>
>
>

Anne Fesh

From: JOANNE_RATH.i@parti.net
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 9:50 AM
To: INFO@ACB.ORG; info@ACB.ORG
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

I am Joanne Rath. My mailing address is:
611 Chelsea Lane
Allentown PA 18104-4410

I am blind, and very much appreciate descriptive video programming.
I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339

Joanne Rath
Email: joanne_rath.i@parti.net
jrath@webcombo.net
Written on Fri, Mar 17, 2000 at 9:31 am

Anne Fesh

From: Duncan Holmes [duncan@ktc.com]
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 9:50 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Dear Sirs:

I have just read Charles Crawford's plea to all of us to let the Fcc know that we support audio description of Tv and other programs. Well, I am also totally blind and am an avid fan of Dvs programs.

This note is to let you know and, I hope, to also voice my support to the Fcc for this venture. Thank you very much!

Sincerely,
Duncan Holmes
email: duncan@ktc.com
Regular mail: 220 Broadmoor
Fredericksburg, Tx 78624

Anne Fesh

From: PAMELA B ROW [pambrow@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 8:28 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

My name is Pamela B. Row and I live at 1101 Grant Road, Mtn. View, CA 94040. As a blind person, I support the FCC proposed rule for Descriptive Video, MM Docket #99-339.

It is only correct to provide descriptive TV for persons with visual inpairment as the deaf have the use of captioning. We have the right for equal access.

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<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/tagj>.

Anne Fesh

From: Ann Brash [abrash@mcs.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 11:41 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Dear FCC members,

I am writing to support MM Docket Number 99-339--the proposed rules for Descriptive Video. I can't tell you how many times I have "watched" a movie (I am totally blind), and sat on the edge of my seat, waiting for the end. But then, when the end came, there was only music and I never knew what happened. Or, how many times I went around the next day at work in desperation, trying to find someone who saw the end of the show who could explain it to me.

But rather than dwelling on the problems I've had, I'd like to tell you what it has meant to me to take part in the descriptive video experiences I have had.

First, I have been able, for the first time in my life, to be thoroughly engrossed in a movie--taken away from my daily life and permitted to escape in the excitement and drama of the story. Usually, I'm so worried about whether I can figure out what is happening that I cannot forget my present world and my present blindness and inability to see the show. I have never been more engrossed in a movie, for example, than when I was watching "Apollo 13." The scenes where the spaceship was flying high above the earth would have been totally incomprehensible to me, had I not had descriptive video.

Secondly, I can begin to understand the importance of body language. When the main character in "Sister Act" was sneaking away from her tormentor, her movements were integral to the story.

Finally, I am less dependent upon others. Usually, I have to rely on them to explain the show, and therefore, I am depriving them of their full experience. This way, everybody wins.

Again, I urge you to support descriptive video. It is extremely important to me and to hundreds of other blind people like me. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Ann Brash
25 S. Stone Ave., Apt H-1
La Grange, IL 60525

Anne Fesh

From: Dawn Wilcox [dewilcox@pacbell.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 5:25 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video-on behalf of

To the FCC; comments re MM Docket No.99-339 relating to DVS.
I am sending this email on behalf of a visually impaired member of SVCB.
Lois Stallknecht holds an MA and is a teacher of French and ESL. She lives
at Monte Vista Terrace 1101 Grant Rd, Apt 144, Mountain View CA 94040
She supports the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video.
Thank you Dawn Wilcox RN

Anne Fesh

From: Dawn Wilcox [dewilcox@pacbell.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 5:14 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video-on behalf of

Dear FCC: re MM docket No. 99-339. I am writing for a 80 year old blind friend who is unable to write herself. Mary Kiefer is in support of DVS, especially on movies. She lives in Stevenson House a complex for senior citizens, 455 E Charleston Rd Apt 220, Palo Alto CA 94306.

Anne Fesh

From: Diane Ayers [SOLITUDE@surry.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 6:31 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Diane Ayers
P.O. Box 1965
Mt. Airy, NC 27030
I am legally blind and support the FCC
proposed rules for descriptive video MM
Docket No. 99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Michael Hoenig [mhoenig@earthlink.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 7:27 PM
To: info@acb.org
Cc: Slaytons
Subject: I support descriptive video

Good Evening:

I am writing in support of the proposed FCC rules for descriptive video (MM Docket # 99-339. I am a blind person who has benefited tremendously from descriptive video, and feel it has made me much more aware of what is being conveyed through the media.

Recently, I watched "Titanic" with descriptive video. Words cannot express my heightened understanding of this movie, compared to what I understood after having watched it without this feature.

Blind and visually impaired persons are tax-paying American citizens who deserve an opportunity to fully enjoy television, movies, and live theater alongside our sighted peers. Descriptive video affords us this opportunity, and I ask that rules requiring its use be approved and enforced.

Sincerely,

Mike Hoenig
2012 East 38th Street Place
Davenport, IA 52807
Phone: 319-344-8787
E-Mail: mhoenig@earthlink.net

Anne Fesh

From: Dr. Katherine Schneider [schneiks@uwec.edu]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 3:52 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear F.C.C.,

I definitely support your rules for Descriptive Video. I am blind and have enjoyed the described video I have had the opportunity to use, particularly those done by Public Television. I'm afraid that without the rules you are making, not much would be done voluntarily. After watching my first descriptive video at about age forty, I finally knew why people enjoy going to the movies; before that it was a chore to figure out what was happening.

Most blind folks are elderly and as our population ages, there will be more of them. It is true that some groups of blind folks do not want anything special like descriptive video, but why should that limit what is available to those of us who do enjoy it?

Thank you and keep regulating!

Sincerely,
Katherine Schneider
Eau Claire, WI

Anne Fesh

From: janet carlson [janetvip@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 2:41 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: i support descriptive video

janet carlson
Teacher of the visually impaired/o&m specialist
i have 50 students who would benefit from descriptive
video service. I SUPPORT IT!

Do You Yahoo!?
Talk to your friends online with Yahoo! Messenger.
<http://im.yahoo.com>

Anne Fesh

From: JLesner@supreme.cde.ca.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 2:39 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

This is corrected copy per instruction - please disregard previous:

Dear FCC Commissioners:

Re: MM Docket No.99-339

Thank you so much for standing up for the rights of blind and low-vision Americans. My son is 16 and is a person with low-vision. He LOVES using descriptive narration and uses it whenever it is available. He says that things make much more sense when he knows what the characters are doing. We regularly rent and buy videos with descriptive narration because they are so much more enjoyable for him.

I also work with teen-agers who are visually-impaired and they also use and love the descriptive narration service. When we watch something without descriptive narration one of our staff has to be there to do the narrating for the students.

I think that now that we have the technology to make it possible for viewers to have equal access to TV, I think that we must make the use of this technology mandatory.

Sincerely,

Judith Lesner
821 42nd Street
Oakland, CA 94608

Anne Fesh

From: doc@telerama.com
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 1:02 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: dascriptive video

Russ Dougherty
176 McAdam Avenue
Washington, Pa. 15301
I am totally blind. I support the F C C rules for descriptive video MM
docket number 99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Terry Snyder [TSNYDER@waterrights.swrcb.ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 11:29 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am not blind but I work with and represent hundreds of the blind community and I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Terry Snyder
Division of Water Rights
P.O. Box 2000
Sacratomatoe, CA 95812-2000
(916) 657-2061 FAX 657-1485
tsnyder@waterrights.swrcb.ca.gov
Web page www.waterrights.ca.gov

Anne Fesh

From: Russell Schermer [schermer@concentric.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 15, 2000 9:18 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support discriptive video

X-UIDL: 9b6a99c40115ba26fld4cb6ff8f7468a

I would first like to thank the ACB for coming out in support of discriptive video. This is a service that has been long overdue. With the proliferation of ads which tell the viewer to "call the number on your screen," and commercials with no voiceovers as well as programming that have long periods of silence or sound effects with no dialogue audio discription is critical to the enjoyment and understanding of the programs. I hope that we in the blind community can get MM99-339 passed in to law. Sincerely

Russell Schermer
KA6VUC

Net-Tamer V 1.12 Beta - Test Drive

Anne Fesh

From: Janis Stanger [jstanger@usor.state.ut.us]
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 10:37 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support video description

I am legally blind. As a child, I would sit two or three feet from the TV and I could see all the things in the world that others with much better vision could see by simply looking out the window. My mother was very concerned about my television viewing habits, and consulted my ophthalmologist. He told her to let me sit as close as I needed and to let me watch as much as I wanted. After all, he said, she can see many things on that television set that she will never see otherwise. Now as an adult, I am married to a man who is totally blind. We watch very little television. I don't know if I would watch more television if it were video described, but I do know that the described video movies I have seen were much more enjoyable to me and to my husband than the undescribed versions of the same. I also know that if television were video described, no blind person would reach the age of 45, as my husband did, believing that everyone's fingernails are the same color as their hair. Just as watching TV when I was a child, expanded my world beyond anything I ever could have experienced personally, so could video description do the same for my husband and the millions like him. Not only would the blind be benefited, but so would the many sponsors who make television possible in America. Seeing those Carls Junior's sloppy burgers make me want a sandwich from them on a regular basis. Think of how many blind people would be affected the same way. Much of advertising is visual. I would think that sponsors of TV programs would like to get the most bang for their buck and make sure that their adds are "seen" by everyone who watches TV. I urge the FCC to consider the issue of video description very carefully and seriously before taking any action on MM99-339

Anne Fesh

From: Robert Burke, Jr. [jasper@cstone.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 2:33 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: ISupport Descriptive Video

701 East High Street
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear FCC Commissioners:

I would like you to approve the rules that you are making under MM--99--339.

I rememered the night that I watched "Apollo 13" at the 1997 National Convention of the American council of the Blind in Houston, Texas.

Without the descriptive naration I would have missed half of the action that was going on the screen.

So I hope that you will totally approve MM--99--339

Respectively yours,

Robert M. Burke Jr.
Executive Board Director
Old Dominion Council of the Blind and Visually Impired

Anne Fesh

From: Dinger, Richard H [Richard.Dinger@PSS.Boeing.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 2:54 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Richard Dinger. I am a blind American writing to express my support for the FCC's proposed rules requiring limited availability of descriptive video services, MM Docket No.99-339. Since PBS can afford to provide DVS for some of their programming, commercial networks should be able to afford some limited version of the same service.

Sincerely,

Richard H. Dinger
2312 104th Ave SE
Bellevue, WA ;98004

Anne Fesh

From: Diana [dianak@ptd.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 3:37 PM
To: INFO@ACB.ORG
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

I AM A PERSON WHO IS BLIND, AND I AM WRITING TO PROCLAIM MY SUPPORT FOR THE FCC'S PROPOSED RULE FOR DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO: MM DOCKET NO. 99-339

IT IS QUITE UNSETTLING TO ME TO BE LISTENING TO ANY KIND OF SHOW ON TV AND NOT ALWAYS KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON. SEVERAL YEARS AGO, THERE WAS A NARRATIVE NETWORK THAT AIRED VIA THE CABLE THAT I SUBSCRIBE TO, AND IT WAS WONDERFUL. THEY ONLY AIRED FOR A FEW HOURS ON A SUNDAY (THAT I'M AWARE OF), BUT IT WAS NICE TO BE ABLE TO LISTEN TO A MOVIE, BY MYSELF, AND KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING AT ALL TIMES. PEOPLE WITH SIGHT DON'T THINK ABOUT THINGS LIKE THAT BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE TO.

I WORK AT AN AGENCY THAT TEACHES PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HOW TO BECOME AS INDEPENDENT AS THEY SO DESIRE. BEING ABLE TO "watch" tv by myself is a level of independence I would certainly welcome. I pay the same cable costs as everyone else, but I am not able to enjoy and understand many of the programs that I listen to.

diana killian
548 franklin st., 1st floor
w. reading, pa 19611

Anne Fesh

From: mary otten [maryotten@home.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 4:11 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

Mary Otten
925 Fordwood Court
Catonsville, Md. 21228
Phone: 410-744-1131

I am a totally blind person who definitely supports descriptive video, and not just for textual messages printed on the tv screen. Much of the content of today's television programs and movies is visual in nature. It is possible to watch a program for literally minutes at a time and hear no meaningful dialogue. INdeed, I would challenge any one of you to turn on your television set some evening, select the programs you wish to watch, and then position yourself so that you cannot see the screen. Then see how much you get out of the experience, as compared to your normal viewing experience. You will, I believe, come away with a greater appreciation of why it is descriptive video must be mandated.

Anne Fesh

From: Bob Hachey [bgh@ConnActivity.ConnActivity.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 4:49 PM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Vidio

My name is Robert Hachey and I can be reached at 22 Grant Street Waltham, MA 02453-4202. I strongly encourage the FCC to adopt the NPRM requiring the addition of descriptive video to regular television programming under MM docket 99339. Descriptive video makes television, plays and movies accessible to the blind and visually impaired. The FCC did the right thing by the deaf by requiring closed captioning. It is time for the FCC to do right by the blind. Thank you for your consideration.
Bob Hachey

Anne Fesh

From: Theresa Zimmerman [ta35z@webtv.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 9:20 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To whom it may concern I am Phillip McCampbell address 1802 Ekin Ave. New Albany In.47150 phone number 812-949-7029

I am writting this note to show my support for bill # MM.99-339. DVS adds much enjoyment for me as I am blind. There is not nearley enough of it around, So your consideration of this bill is greatly appricated.

Sincerly Phillip McCampbell

Anne Fesh

From: vernon j daigle [vdaigle@juno.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 12:53 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video.

To Federal Communications Commission:

We are both totally blind. We know that descriptive video would be a major boost to enjoying and understanding television programming. We strongly support descriptive video under "mm document #99-339".

Vernon and Hazel Daigle
1919 North Amelia Avenue
Gonzalews, Louisiana 70737

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<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/tagj>.

Anne Fesh

From: Crystavox [jwb@ionet.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 11:29 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support discriptive Video

Jason Boston
220 SW 34 apt.17
OKC, OK 73109

I am totally blind and I would love to be able to watch TV that is narrated. Many popular shows would be much easier to follow if I could hear what sighted people see. Please consider further steps to make this a reality.

Thanks,
Jason Boston

Anne Fesh

From: Fred Chambers [regenerative@earthlink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 2:09 AM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: MM Docket number 99-339 Video Description

Dear Federal Communications Commission, et al.

Population projections show that about half of the retirement-aged population are or will be legally blind. As our nation ages, we need to accommodate this gigantic blind population. Please encourage the TV industry to offer more video description. Two main areas concern me: description of the video or image, and reading of on-screen text. I enjoy video description, but it seems artful, and very difficult to mandate. Screen reading, the more important feature seems easy to implement.

Each TV needs an inexpensive optical character recognition (OCR) feature that can be turned off and on. This would solve the problem of text on the screen. This text could be easily read by an inexpensive OCR feature that would enable the blind, or anyone not looking at the screen, to hear the text.

Text on the screen is very common. From news shows with talking heads identified by a caption, to weather warnings and sports scores that scroll across the screen, to those cryptic little words shown during the X-Files. Some text comes from the network, other text is generated by the local station, and emergency text may be generated from a third pathway. All of these could easily be read aloud through a speech synthesizer using integrated OCR software. It looks straightforward to decentralize the screen reading by incorporating it right into the set itself.

While you consider the future of TV description, please ensure that blind access to information will increase. Inexpensive, common sense solutions like OCR are the easy part. Video description is more complicated, and I'll leave that for experts to decide.

Thanks for your time,

Frederick M Chambers
3510 Bedford Circle
Carlsbad, CA. 92008

760-505-8500 <regenerative@earthlink.net> Agricultural-Sciences

On location in Carlsbad, Calif. USA. Serving an internship at Hubbs-Sea World's Hubbard Marine Fish Hatchery, and collecting data for my MS in Sustainable Aquaculture from Cal Poly Pomona.
http://www.buschgardens.org/endangered_species/esV.html

Anne Fesh

From: Rosalie Goumas [ronamoss@juno.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 9:46 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Dvs mm 99-339

C and I just received your notice yesterday. For the past ten years we have been excited about Dvs and understand Tv more than we ever did. It is also great going to the science museum and listen to the descriptions at the Omni as the movies are presented.

We are both outraged by Nfb's Attitude about this subject. Accessibility means a lot to the blind community and "It is not just an inconvenience". I have always said that as long as the blind community splits nothing is going to get resolved.

Dvs has opened a whole new world in education for all of us. Don't close us out.

Sincerely:

Rosalie and Charles Goumas

Music is a gift from God.

Must be created according to His Will and in Honor of His Glory.

Anne Fesh

From: Joseph Taboada [JTaboada@mail.vetmed.lsu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 10:11 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

To whom it may concern,

I am an NFB member and the father of a 6 year old blind child. We were introduced to the descriptive video service when our son was 3 years old and have since used it extensively. It has opened up such worlds as Aladdin, Beauty and the Beast, Lion King, Arthur, and Star Wars to him and has allowed him to experience something that the others kids take for granted. It has allowed him to be a part of his "society" at a time when integration into a normal social structure is so critical. We are very thankful for the people and the grants who have supported the descriptive video service. It is only too bad that there is not more available on regular television or in the movie theaters that would open those worlds up to him as well. I support the FCC's effort to expand the use of the descriptive video in much the same way closed caption is used for the deaf community.

Thank you for all of your support in this area.

Joseph Taboada
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Anne Fesh

From: Cheryl Duke [cduke@wcduke.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 10:28 AM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support descriptive video



cduke.vcf

From: Cheryl Duke, Member American Council of the Blind
8049 Ormesby Lane
Woodford, VA 22580-3211

To: The FCC

I support the descriptive video initiative under "MM Docket number 99-339. This will give people who are blind or have low vision the same access to television and videos that closed captioning gives persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Anne Fesh

From: Patricia Ellis [robin308@ime.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 11:08 AM
To: ACB
Subject: "I support descriptive video"

George Roderick
9 Hancock Street
Augusta, ME 04330

I am blind and I support descriptive video as described in MM Document No. 99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Ed Guerra [edguerra@mail.utexas.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 11:34 AM
To: Info@acb.org
Subject: I suport descriptive vidio

Edward F. Guerra
4810 Rustown Drive
Austin, TX 78727

I am blind and I suport docket MM number 99-339.

Edward Guerra

Anne Fesh

From: Michael D. Barber [m1437b@home.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 12:33 PM
To: info@ACB.org
Cc: LaDonna Seliger
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

I am Michael D. Barber, 1437 Guthrie Avenue, Des Moines, Ia, 50316-1611, President of the Des Moines Chapter, Iowa Council of the United Blind. We are a local chapter of blind persons committed to improving the social and economic well-being of blind Iowans and blind people everywhere.

I, along with several members of our chapter, have had the privilege of "viewing" movies which have been adapted for descriptive video and have enjoyed them very much. We fully support the proposed rule by the FCC which would require the movie industry and the television networks to provide programming with descriptive video for the benefit of blind persons who either watch television, attend movie theaters or purchase or rent movies.

We believe the testimony put forth by the National Federation of the Blind and espoused by Direct TV, other cable networks, the major television networks and the movie industry indicating that a majority of blind persons aren't really that interested in descriptive video and that providing descriptive video should be voluntary and not mandatory, is unfounded and untrue. They do not speak for a majority of blind persons who use and want descriptive video.

Therefore, we urge the adoption of MM Docket number 99-339 as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
Michael D. Barber, President
Des Moines Chapter
Iowa Council of the United Blind

Michael D. Barber
ICQ #60005213

Anne Fesh

From: Travis and Jean Van Winkle [JT-VanWinkle@worldnet.att.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 12:35 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: descriptive video

I wish to express my strong support for the FCC'S ruling regarding descriptive video for the blind. I refer to docket no. MM99339. I am blind myself and could make great use of descriptive vide o if more were available.

Jeanie Van Winkle

info@acb.org

Anne Fesh

From: Pam Brandin [pbrandin@pcbvi.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 1:05 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video Services

Dear Chairman Kennard and Members of the FCC:

I am writing on behalf of Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Palo Alto, California, in support of descriptive video services to make television programs accessible to people who are unable to see them because of blindness or visual impairment.

Our agency was founded on the conviction that sight loss need not be a barrier to self-reliance or self-esteem, and our services to 1,000 people annually enable them to achieve their highest potential for independence in the sighted community. Being able to access the information, education, and entertainment programs on television is of great importance in achieving self-reliance, self-esteem, and independence.

More than half of our clients are over the age of 60 and the majority of these older individuals have lost their vision due to the process of aging. They are often isolated, lonely, and depressed. They, and the other younger individuals who may be better able to participate more fully in the community, would benefit greatly by having the ability to hear what those of us who are sighted can see on television.

I urge you to move forward with requirements for increased descriptive programming on television.

Sincerely,
Pam Brandin, Executive Director
Peninsula Center for the Blind
and Visually Impaired
2470 El Camino Real, #107
Palo Alto, CA 94306
650 858-0202

Anne Fesh

From: Marlaina Lieberg [marlaina@traico.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 1:12 PM
To: info@ACB.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

The single greatest barrier I as a woman who is blind must face is the inequity in communication of the printed word or the unspoken dialogue in a movie. Video description is equal in importance to me as captioning has been to persons who are deaf. I support this concept, and stand prepared to do my part to help the Commission bring it about.

My right to know will be dramatically more assured once I too can see all the things communicated to the human eye.

Mrs. Marlaina Lieberg
632 S. 189th St.
Burien, WA 98148

(206) 243 1716

Marlaina Lieberg, President
TRAICO, Inc.
Opening Doors Through Opening Minds

"The most pathetic person in the world is someone who has sight but has no vision."

Helen Keller, (1880-1968)

Anne Fesh

From: Gail Elaine Irons [brightskies@wans.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 7:31 PM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Gail Elaine Irons, M.A.
3719 W. Cavalier Dr.
Phoenix, AZ 85019-1717
(602) 225-1717 March 14, 2000

Dear FCC Staff:

I support the FCC's proposed rules for descriptive video - MM docket #99-339.

I am a psychologist in private practice. I have been blind since a childhood accident in 1954.

If you have not already done so, please try "watching" TV with your eyes closed; see how long you can stand it; not through a whole program, I'll wager. Gets confusing, doesn't it - with some shows more than others.

I am aware that some blind people are not interested in DVS; nevertheless, even they would glean more from television programming if it were available. So long as listening to added narration is optional - not automatically a part of the soundtrack every viewer hears - it would be very desirable.

Ironically, the ranks of legally blind people are increasing rapidly, due to a combination of medical advances keeping premature babies alive and enabling people to live longer. I doubt you hear much from elderly blind folks. When people lose vision late in life, many tend to "drop out" of community activities, sad to say. Nevertheless, the majority do watch/listen to television. Whether or not you are hearing from them, you can bet they would appreciate descriptive audio letting them know what they would otherwise miss.

Also, many commercials lately have had little or no narration, leaving me to wonder what they are about. Blind people are consumers. With the possible exception of car ads, advertisers would do well to provide at least audio description (if not regular narration/dialog).

Sincerely yours,
Gail Elaine Irons
Wishing You Bright Skies,
GailElaine

Wishing You Bright Skies,
GailElaine

Anne Fesh

From: jacobsli@concentric.net
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 8:37 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support discriptive video

From; Linda Jacobson
2915 Circle Ridge Dr.
Orange park, FL 32065

Please consider that blind people should have better access to television programs. I support the FCC proposed rules MM docket number 99.339.

Anne Fesh

From: Jerry Sparks [wb4owc@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 10:03 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear FCC Commissioner,

My name is Jerry Sparks and being blind I support Descriptive Video. I live at 1004 Drexel drive in Homewood, Alabama. My zip code is 35209. I also have many blind friends and most of them support it also. The proposed rule for Descriptive Video is MM Docket No.99-339. Being somewhat technical, amateur extra call wb4owc, I know that it is easier and far more economical that it, description, be added initially and not as an after-thought. It will be no more difficult than was Closed Captioning now so prevalent in movies and television as well as the other forms of media.

Please support and vote in favor of MM Docket No.99-339

Thanks
Jerry Sparks

Anne Fesh

From: Jerry Sparks [wb4owc@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 10:05 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear FCC Commissioner,

My name is Teresa Sparks and being blind I support Descriptive Video. I live at 1004 Drexel drive in Homewood, Alabama. My zip code is 35209. I also have many blind friends and most of them support it also. The proposed rule for Descriptive Video is MM Docket No.99-339.

Please support and vote in favor of MM Docket No.99-339

Thanks
Teresa Sparks

Anne Fesh

From: Andy Baracco [wg6r@concentric.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 11:44 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

My name is Andrew Baracco.

I live at 10444 Canoga Ave. Unit 53
Chatsworth CA 91311-2665

Phone: 818-885-8559

I support the proposed FCC rules for descriptive Video, MM Docket 99-339.

Sincerely,
Andrew Baracco

Anne Fesh

From: Slaytons [slaytons@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 10:02 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

My Name is Jo Ann Slayton.

My husband and I are both blind.

We both support the FCC's proposed rules for descriptive video service MM Docket No. 99-339.

This is a very valuable and owrthwhile service to hundreds of blind persons around hte country.

Descriptive video service, and verbalizing information connected with infomercials and advertising would be most helpful to blind persons in the U.S.

I happened to receive word via e-mail about this important proposed ruling; however, I'm concerned about many blind persons who do not know this FCC proposal would have any opposition and who, therefore, are not writing, as they are not informed on this point.

Please know that there are many blind persons who benefit greatly from descriptive video and the like!!

Thank you for your consideraton on this matter.

My address is:

Jo Ann Slayton

4013 30th St.

Des Moines, Iowa 50310-5944

Phone: (515) 279-4284

E-mail

slaytons@earthlik.net

Thank you for your consideration and support of descriptive video services.

Anne Fesh

From: Gary Lee [gdlee@bsu-cs.bsu.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 3:08 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Gary Lee
1221 West Riverside ave.
Muncie, in 47303

I am totally blind and strongly support the rules for descriptive video proposed in MM docket #99-339. This is primarily the same issue as put forward by the deaf community for closed captioning. We, the blind TV watchers of America deserve the same treatment.

Gary Lee
Ball State University
765-285-1310

Anne Fesh

From: Laura Park-Leach [lparkleach@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 8:12 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Laura Park-Leach
Metrolina Association for the Blind
704 Louise Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28204

I believe that all people deserve equal access to television. Decriptive video provides that opportunity for people who are blind and visually impaired. Our agency represents over 100 people who regularly utilize descriptive video movies and would like to see this become a standard on television.

I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO ON TELEVISION!

Do You Yahoo!?
Talk to your friends online with Yahoo! Messenger.
<http://im.yahoo.com>

Anne Fesh

From: Sandra Merchant [SMerchant@mail.vetmed.lsu.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 11:13 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Descriptive Video

I support descriptive video. My son loves it.

Sandy Merchant Taboada

Anne Fesh

From: Ellen Bergstrom [ebergstrom@excelonline.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 9:38 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Ellen Bergstrom, and although I am not blind, I see much value in and support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. Making descriptive video a choice for all television viewers, much like closed captioning is today, allows access to information and entertainment to all. I can think of occasions where I would appreciate the choice of having descriptive video, even though I have sight, listening to a TV show or movie while I'm working in another room, for example.

Even more important though, is the access it would give to my friends who are blind. Although they accept it with good grace, they get frustrated when we are watching a show and they miss the dramatic pause or the facial expression that makes the rest of us erupt with laughter a second later.

Please consider joining me in support of the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Thank you,
Ellen Bergstrom

Anne Fesh

From: Harvey Heagy [heagy@earthlink.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 19, 2000 9:53 PM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

6525 Park Manor Dr. apt 43
Metairie, La. 70003.
Mar. 20 2000

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a blind person, and In the matter regarding MM Docket number 99-339, I wholeheartedly support the proposed rules governing Descriptive Video. I think this is a service that can greatly enhance our lives and with the visual medium of today relying more and more on visual effects rather than dialogue I feel that access to this medium for blind people is paramount and now. Please implement the proposed rules as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Harvey Heagy

Anne Fesh

From: Donna Miller [DONNA@ccadnet.c-cad.org]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 10:30 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video.

My name is Donna Miller
Address: 7373 Valley View Lane apartment 1013

Dallas, Texas 75240

I am a blind person who supports Descriptive Video and I believe that rights to have it are long overdue.

Donna Miller

Center for Computer Assistance to the Disabled
Phone: 214-800-2223
Email: donna@mail.c-cad.org

Anne Fesh

From: William Tucker [wtucker@hiwaay.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 10:25 AM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

MM Docket number 99-339 Descriptive Video

William Tucker
1001 O'Shaughnessy Ave
Huntsville, AL 35801

I am Blind and support the Video Descriptive initiative

Anne Fesh

From: David Maynard [maynard@dnet.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 11:08 AM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To Whom it may concern:

I am totally blind and support descriptive video under "MM Docket number 99-339."

With the tornado and hurricane season upon us, it is very disconcerting to here a weather advisory being sent across the TV screen and hear only a Beeping alert and have no idea what the advisory contains.

Respectfully,

David C. Maynard
171 Forest Ave., Apt. 106
Franklin NC 28734

Anne Fesh

From: sjeffers@supreme.cde.ca.gov
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 11:32 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive programming

Descriptive video should be mandated for all television programming. I am a counselor at the CA School for the Blind, and see a tremendous need for descriptive programming, not only because it is useful to the blind and visually impaired population, but because they deserve to have access to all the same information as a sighted person.

Sara Jefferson

Anne Fesh

From: David Edick [DEdick@SeattleLH.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 12:23 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support descriptive video

David Edick

333 West Lippert Dr. #A101

Port Orchard, WA 98366

I am a blind individual who supports the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Thanks

Anne Fesh

From: Sarah J. Phaneuf [sjp_mab@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 12:56 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To Whom it May Concern:

I am not a person who is blind, but I work at Metrolina Association for the Blind and am an advocate. I see first hand how many people benefit from this service because I have over 100 local consumers who participate in our Descriptive Video service (which is very similar to the National Library Service for the Blind.) This list of consumers grows weekly as more find out about DVS and it's availability through us.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT the FCC proposed rules for Descriptive Video and equal access to television programming for people who are blind and visually impaired

Sarah J. Phaneuf

=====

Rehabilitation Teacher/Counselor
Metrolina Association for the Blind
Charlotte, NC

Do You Yahoo!?
Talk to your friends online with Yahoo! Messenger.
<http://im.yahoo.com>

Anne Fesh

From: Don Bishop [donbishop49@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 1:10 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

My name is Donald Bishop, address: 390 Thornton St. San Leandro Ca 94577.

I am totally blind and wholeheartedly support Docket Number MM 99-339.

Implementation of such a proposal will greatly assist blind people in more fully participating in the television experience which is such an important factor in today's life.

Thank you,

Donald Bishop

Anne Fesh

From: Al Gayzagian [algayz@world.std.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 1:44 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

The two of us, Al and Betty Gayzagian, both blind, have enjoyed descriptive video programming since its inception on WGBH. We have found ourselves enjoying programs which we would otherwise not have even turned on. We therefore urge the FCC to continue its support of MM Docket No.99-339. We know that the National Federation of the Blind does not support this proposal, but we also know members of that organization who enjoy described programming. Unfortunately, the NFB leadership did not choose to ask their opinion. We appreciate what the FCC has done so far and urge you to stay the course with us.

We are: Al & Betty Gayzagian, 74 Lincoln Street, Watertown, MA 02472.

Anne Fesh

From: Debbie Donnellan [donmouse@access.mountain.net]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 1:53 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Debbie Donnellan, and my address is 123 Waverly Way, Clarksburg, WV 26301. I strongly support descriptive video. I think it's a wonderful service. With DVS, I can watch a movie by myself without missing any of the action that takes place. As a totally blind user, I think that the rules for descriptive video service, as proposed by the FCC, MM Docket No.99-339 should be enforced.

Sincerely,
Debbie

Anne Fesh

From: Chief [lummy@multipro.com]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2000 1:52 PM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

FCC ,

I wish to let you know that I support descriptive video because I am blind and it would really make my life more enjoyable.
MM Docket number 99-339

Ann Nahod
304 E. Bronson St.
Sparta, TN 38583

Anne Fesh

From: Dawn Wilcox [dewilcox@pacbell.net]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 6:54 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear ACB, I am a blind RN and support having descriptive video on TV. How can blind people keep up with current information which is necessary when competing for jobs with out having DVS to enhance the audible portion of a show. And how can we buy items that we don't know about because certain adds are only visual with music and no speech. I mostly look at PBS because it has some DVS. I think we of the blind and visually impaired community have as much need of information of all kinds as the not currently impaired folks and the deaf who have captioning.

I support FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.
Thank you Dawn Wilcox RN, 810 Wintergreen Way Palo Alto CA 94303

Anne Fesh

From: Jerry Berrier [berrier@banet.net]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 7:29 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

I am a person who is blind, and I place high value on Descriptive Video.

I have listened to many movies with Descriptive Video and realized that, although I enjoyed them immensely, my enjoyment was in large part due to the descriptions. I would have missed much without them.

It goes far beyond enjoyment, though. The audio descriptions "level the playing field" to some extent for me, and that is extremely important.

I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Jerry Berrier
108 Bumble Bee Circle
Shrewsbury, MA 01545
Home phone: 508-845-9944
work: 508-460-4637
email: berrier@banet.net

Anne Fesh

From: Dan Roy [dir@bytemeusa.com]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 7:47 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Hello

My name is Dan Roy
I am a blind citizen of the US.
my address is;
720 E Old Willow Rd.
Prospect Heights, IL 60070
I support the FCC's proposal for descriptive video rules MM Docket
No.99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Sharkent@aol.com
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 8:42 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video.

My name is Sheila Styron, and I am blind. I reside at 1215 N. Olive Dr. #306 W. Hollywood, CA 90069. I M writing to strongly express my support of the FCC's proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Anne Fesh

From: Vicki Ratcliffe [vickirat@smart.net]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 8:38 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Vidio

From: Vicki Ratcliffe

Address: 203 Yoakum Parkway, Unit 920, Alexandria, Virginia 22304

Date: March 13, 2000

To: American Council for the Blind

Subject: I Support Descriptive Vidio

This message is being written to express support for FCC proposal MM Docket 99399 and to encourage the FCC to pursue its efforts for descriptive vidio through television media. I am totally blind and feel that descriptive vidio of programs would enhance opportunity to gather the same information as our sighted counterparts. Having used audio description in the theater has increased my awareness of stage performance and has allowed me to obtain equality of information as others. Expanding these efforts in to the world of television will enable blind people to maintain awareness of world events and obtain equal status with sighted consumers while "seeing" programs of choice.

Thank you.

Anne Fesh

From: Charles Crawford [CCrawford@ACB.org]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 4:25 PM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support Descriptive video

My Name is charles crawford. My address is 1906 rookwood road in silver spring Md 20910 and I am blind. Isupport the fCC proposed rule for descriptive video (MM docket number 99-339)

Anne Fesh

From: Shig Toda [TodaS@state.mi.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 7:36 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video.

Hi:

I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM No. 99-339. If deaf people have access to closed caption, I don't see why blind people can't have the equal privilege. I am totally blind. When I watch TV, I almost inevitably need someone to describe the screen to me. It would be wonderful if I can enjoy the program without having to depend on another person.

Sincerely,
Shig Toda
4307 Lake Forest Dr.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

Anne Fesh

From: heinl@juno.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 8:07 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: i support descriptive video

As a totally blind person I support the increase use of descriptive video. The National Federation of the Blind does not speak for me or for that matter does not speak for a majority of blind people. Please disregard their self serving position on this matter and include blind people in the American dream.

Thank you,

Thomas J. Heidl
456 Blair Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55103
E-Mail heinl@juno.com
Home Phone 651-489-8609

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<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/tagj>.

Anne Fesh

From: Primo Cadawas [primo@cyberia.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 8:08 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Primo Cadawas
4 Woodland Drive
Shrewsbury, Pa. 17361

Phone: (717) 227 1105
Email: primo@cyberia.com

March 14, 2000

Dear sir,

I am Totally blind without any light perception. I supports the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video. MM Docket No.99-339.

This proposal, if approve will mean a lot to the blind community at large. Please approve the MM Docket No.99-339, and let us blind people enjoy the things that other do. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Primo Cadawas

Anne Fesh

From: pride [pride@teclink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 8:28 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am totally blind and live alone. I could certainly benefit from and derive greater enjoyment of television if descriptive video were available. I support the proposed FCC regulations MM Docket number 99-339 for descriptive video.

Becky Floyd
131 Red Fox Lane
Madison, MS 39110

Anne Fesh

From: Pam Scott [Pam@tcb.state.tx.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:28 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Cc: 'edguerra@mail.utexas.edu'
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Pamela Scott. I am a rehabilitation teacher with the Texas Commission for the Blind, and blind myself. I want to take this opportunity to let you know how important descriptive video is to the blindness community. I am both a user of descriptive video and a teacher who promotes this technology to my blind consumers. , most of whom have lost their ability to read print. For many of these individuals television is the one vital reliable link that connects them to the outside world. This issue is a matter of access. Descriptive video is as important to the blind as closed captioning is to the deaf. This is a matter of choice. Those of us who want this technology should have it available to us. If you doubt the importance of descriptive video, I challenge you to experience your favorite program by viewing it under blindfold.

Pam Scott
4800 N. Lamar, Suite 100
Austin, Texas 78756
Phone: (512) 377-0538
Fax: (512) 377-0461
e-mail: pam@tcb.state.tx.us

Anne Fesh

From: Darrell Shandrow [darrell@neta.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:56 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

March 14, 2000

Dear FCC:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your proposed rules for descriptive video, MM Docket Number 99-339. I am a blind access technology specialist and lead support technician for a local Internet service provider. Besides my work, and among many other interests, I do enjoy watching television, despite the fact that I possess minimal usable eye sight. I own several described videos from Descriptive Video Service, and enjoy them very much. The ability to independently hear a description of the action in a movie as it is happening, without bothering other sighted watchers or in the absence of sighted people, enhances the value of entertainment for me as a blind viewer. The technology for descriptive video has been in use for more than 10 years now, and I see no reason why it shouldn't be put into wider use. Since the technology is reliable and well-defined, there should be no question as to what constitutes accessibility for the blind in the case of descriptive video. You can be confident that, despite objections from industry and a certain splinter group of blind individuals, the blind are really in support of greater utilization of descriptive video. Furthermore, requiring descriptive video does not represent an undue burden on the industry.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Darrell Shandrow
President and Access Technology Specialist
Proactive Accessibility
950 S. Terrace Road #D169
Tempe, AZ 85281
(480)517-9774
nu7i@proactive-access.com

Anne Fesh

From: June Corbid [corbid@sendit.sendit.nodak.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:36 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I have worked with visually impaired individuals for 24 years. One of the best things to ever happen to allow for normal conversation between the visually impaired and the sighted community was descriptive video. The visually impaired person is now able to discuss the movie/information, in its entirety, and not just draw conclusions because said person was not able to see during the non-vocal scenes. Please know this is a wonderful and useful endeavor.

June Corbid OMA

Anne Fesh

From: RON.BARTON@DFAS.MIL
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 10:37 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

I am a blind male, and I support the FCC rule of descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339.

Ron Barton
7068 Sl Lafayette Way
Littleton, CO., 80122
Phone: (303) 798-2755

Anne Fesh

From: Jim Vaglia [jimjv@home.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 10:34 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Writing in support of FCC descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Mr. James J. Vaglia
2926 Brentwood Ave.
Pittsburgh Pa 15227
412 881-0526

To whom it may concern:

As deaf and hard of hearing individuals enjoy closed captioning on a daily bases I support blind persons rite to enjoy the descriptive television programming on a daily bases.

Sincerely,

Jim Vaglia

Anne Fesh

From: Rob Turner [rbturner@primenet.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 8:49 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video service

Rob Turner
480 North Winchester Blvd. #8
Santa Clara, CA 95050

I'm writing this message to indicate my support for Descriptive Video. As a totally blind person, I believe that an audio description of television, movies and multimedia, would be very helpful. Without this information it can be extremely difficult to follow what's happening on the screen.

Rob Turner

Anne Fesh

From: Harriet [Harriet@cleanweb.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:53 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Hi!

Without wearing a contact and a lens implant; I would be legally blind. My brother-in-law is blind and supports the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Please do something to provide descriptive video for my brother-in-law. I might need it someday; but God-willing I won't.

Thank you.

Harriet Sundermeier

Anne Fesh

From: Krista Dubroff [kdubroff@acb.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 12:02 PM
To: Anne Fesh
Subject: I support Video Description

I have worked on behalf of the blind for four year. I strongly support the FCC's proposed rules implementing video description for television programming (Docket no. 99-339)

Is vital that this segment of the population have equal access to television programming which essential for full participation in all cultural, educational, and social aspects of our society.

By supporting video description you support principles of access, equality, and inclusion. Thank you for your efforts in supporting these principles. It makes the world a better place!

Anne Fesh

From: Bill 3 Rail [bill3rail@worldnet.att.net]

Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 7:47 AM

To: info@acb.org

Subject: I support descriptive video

Elizabeth Garner

55 North Maple Street

Farmingdale, NY 11735

I am blind and totally support the FCC's supposed rules for descriptive video mm docket number 99-339

I am an elementary school teacher and use Descriptive Videos in teaching such as for writing exercises. Putting Descriptive Video

on television would greatly increase experiences and usage.

I also wish to thank the FCC for its strong steps forward for descriptive video and accessibility for the blind.

Elizabeth Garner

Anne Fesh

From: Pam Bilton [pbilton@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 1:14 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support Descriptive Video programming.

I would like to state here that I feel that Captioning for the Deaf only policy isn't fair to the blind community. Assuredly deaf people should be able to read the print texts of programs on their TV screens but blind people need to have the same access to descriptive video programming, where actions and descriptions of costumes and facial expressions are vividly described to the blind user with very little expense. These descriptive narrations are described on a sub channel that does not hinder the enjoyment of the deaf community or the hearing sighted public. Please do everything possible to get docket No. 99339 passed as law. My husband and I would greatly appreciate this legislation being passed since we both enjoy descriptive video programming.

Mrs. Pam Bilton
1825 Saint Julian Place
Apartment 71
Columbia, South Carolina 29204

Thank you for your help in this most important matter! I would like to add here that commercials should have descriptive video as well as documentaries that blind people cannot see.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Pam Bilton

Anne Fesh

From: Frank Tompkins [ftompki@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 3:24 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Dear Sirs:

I am Franklin E. Tompkins, 2708 Cherokee Road, Birmingham, AL 35216. I am referring to FCC Docket #99-339. I support having descriptive video as available as Closed Captioning is for the deaf. Although we are few in number, we should have the same access as anyone else.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

Franklin E. Tompkins

Anne Fesh

From: Red167@aol.com
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 5:47 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Rose Deterding
167 Quail Hollow Dr.
San Jose CA 95128

I am legally blind and I support the
FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. (#) 99-339.

It would be nice to hear the bulletins and other information which I cannot
read.

Thank you.

Rose

Anne Fesh

From: Donald League [dleague@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 6:26 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video:

As a blind person, I would like to add my support to the FCC proposed rules on descriptive video, MM Docket No.99339, which would greatly increase the use of descriptive video. I hardly watch any TV at all, partly because it is so much more visual than it used to be. Even commercials (as much as I hate them) are so visual that I sometimes cannot even figure out what is being advertised. And now, emergency information is usually scrolled across the bottom of the screen without any thought that we can't possibly know it is even there. Descriptive video is definitely needed for us to be able to fully enjoy TV or movies.

Don League
301 South Eden Dr.
Cayce, SC 29033
Email: dleague@bellsouth.net

Anne Fesh

From: Elizabeth Hom [ehom@pcbvi.org]
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 8:58 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive videos

I work with many blind people who appreciate having visual images described to them. Imagine if you couldn't see and all you could do is listen to your television. You would be missing more than 50% of the message shows and commercials are giving. Descriptive videos help fill in the gap so people don't feel lost or confused when they are listening to their television programs.

Anne Fesh

From: MCM [jennypat@concentric.net]
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 10:06 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

I am a totally blind adult who strongly supports the FCC's proposed rules for descriptive video, MM Docket No. 99-339.

I commend the FCC's efforts to establish the means for blind children and adults in the United States to gain full access to television programming. I, and many other blind people of my acquaintance, greatly enjoy the descriptive video services of PBS and Turner Classic Movies, and the described movies available through other sources. I believe that there are thousands of blind and severely visually impaired persons who would welcome descriptive video on television and cable channels.

Marjorie Miller
6157 N. Sheridan Rd., Unit 3L
Chicago, IL 60660-2829

Anne Fesh

From: Linda Wyman [lcwyman@ibm.net]
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2000 10:39 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To the Federal Communications Commission:

I am blind, and I support the FCC rules for descriptive video, MM Docket No. 99-939.

Audio description has made an incredible difference in my enjoyment of television and movies, even though access is currently quite limited. Descriptive video makes popular culture accessible to those of us who are blind and visually impaired. Please help keep that doorway open to even more access. Thank you.

Linda C. Wyman
Board Member, American Council of the Blind of Ohio
President, Accessible Arts, Inc. of Columbus, Ohio
242 West New England Avenue
Worthington OH 43085
(614) 846-7268
lcwyman@ibm.net

Anne Fesh

From: Ellen Moulder [emoulder@utah-inter.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 12:40 AM
To: ACB Internet Information
Subject: Fw: I support descriptive video

----- Original Message -----

From: Ellen Moulder
To: ACB Internet Information
Sent: Thursday, March 16, 2000 8:47 PM
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am legally blind and support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM
Docket No.99-339.

Ellen A. Moulder
1705 N. Hickory Ln.
Provo, Utah 84604-1384
(801) 377-7007

Anne Fesh

From: Vivian Conger [topaz@valint.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 12:35 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Discriptive Video

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am a blind person who is in support of the FCC's proposed rules for discriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. My contact information is:

Vivian Conger
608 East Rose
Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 526-4967
e-mail: topaz@valint.net

Thanks for considering my comment.

Vivian Conger and Peg
Class 324 from Guide Dogs of America
topaz@valint.net

Anne Fesh

From: Jeanne-Marie Moore [suncook@concentric.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 2:56 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Jeanne-Marie Moore
2852 Willamette Street #103
Eugene, Oregon 97405

as an industry standard.

I fully support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339, and hope the rules can become an industry standard.

People who are blind and visually impaired gain important information from descriptive video which can affect the ability to fully integrate into a sighted majority world.

Anything which promotes the "separatist" view that "it is not important" for people who are blind to have this type of information is extremely short-sighted. I have learned an incredible amount about nonverbal communication, fashion, and how sighted people interact as a result of descriptive video.

Thank you for listening to me. I know my friends who are blind feel this way, and borrow, rent, and purchase videos once they have descriptions included.

The experiments in theaters have been, from my understanding, very successful, and I heard about people who could FINALLY attend a mainstream film and not disturb other patrons with questions. (One always thinks one is being quiet, but it almost always disturbs someone to have someone describing what is going on.)

Sincerely,

Jeanne-Marie Moore

Anne Fesh

From: jhooper23 [jhooper23@earthlink.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 11:17 AM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support discriptive vidio

Hi I am blind james Hooper
my address is 1414 clemmens ave nw Warren oh 44485
I am in support under (MM docket number 99-339.
I am blind and find descriptive video helpful in understanding those ceens
that would normally be hard for me to follow.
I believe the more description on regular tv, blind audiences everywhere
would benefit.

Anne Fesh

From: Kevin LaRose [thumper@eskimo.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 11:28 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video!

I am writing in support of the FCC's proposed rules concerning descriptive video under MM docket number 99-339. As an individual who is blind, I have found descriptive video to be a truly beneficial service. Descriptive video does much, much more than just describing costumes and facial expressions. There are times in movies and television shows where nonverbal cues are given that are very important to the plot of the movie or show. Since I can't see the action, I would totally miss these subtle nuances of nonverbal plot development. Descriptive video makes it possible for movies and television shows to be totally accessible for blind individuals. I urge support of these proposed rules.

Kevin LaRose
1926 28 ST SE
Auburn WA 98002
Phone: (253)887-1353

Anne Fesh

From: Bud Keith [budkeith@netcom.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 11:28 AM
To: Info@ACB.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video (MM Docket No. 99-339)

I am Dr. Raymond Keith. I live at 737 N. Buchanan Street in Arlington, Virginia.

I encourage you to enable blind and visually impaired people to have access to invaluable information that is provided through video description of television and movies.

I also ask you to refrain from allowing this issue to become a political football. You are hearing from the National Federation of the Blind that they oppose such a requirement, however you should be aware that they took great public pride in their sponsorship of descriptive video of the 1997 inauguration of President Clinton. They are also the forward thinking folks who oppose tactile warnings on train and subway platforms. They do not represent all blind people although their autocratic organization makes it appear as if there might be national unity.

budkeith@netcom.com

bud keith Ph.D., blind cross-country skier, tandem biker,
returned Peace Corps volunteer and retired civil servant
surviving prostate cancer in arlington virginia since August, 1995.

Anne Fesh

From: marie keane [mkeane@telerama.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 11:44 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: descriptive video

Marie Keane
129 Linshaw Avenue
Pgh PA 15205

I am blind and support the FCC rules ofr descriptive video. MM docket no. 99-339

"May today there b peace within you. May you trust God that you are exactly where you were meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith. May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you."

Anne Fesh

From: Frank Cuta [cuta@bentonrea.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 11:53 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Dear FCC,

My name is Frank cuta. I have been blind for the past 35 years and only recently have I realized the tremendous increase in access that descriptive video brings to movies and television. Now I too can enjoy those long silent passages where the nasty villin is creeping through the night with his knife ready to commit his murderous crime.

Please give your support to descriptive video under "MM Docket number 99-339.

Frank Cuta
58903 Sweetwater PRNE
Benton City, WA 99320

Anne Fesh

From: William Wilson [willie@telerama.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 2:17 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

X-UIDL: b3aaa825d63695c3e35231fa4bb26d99

William J. Wilson
170 Lincoln Ave.
Apt. 1
Pittsburgh PA 15202-3904

Phone: 412-766-8511 Email: willie@telerama.com

As a blind citizen of this great country, I am being denied complete access to what is overwhelmingly the greatest purveyor of information and news to the populace. This injustice, however, could be rectified just as it has been for the deaf community with the implimentation of Descriptive Video Captioning! Therefore, let it be known that I support MM Docket number 99-339 and all legislation directed towards giving me equal access to television!

William J. Wilson

Net-Tamer V 1.11.2 - Registered

Anne Fesh

From: Mary Grace Lodico [mglodico@primeline.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 3:47 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Mary Grace Lodico and I live at 335 East Street in Waynesville, N C 28786. I am blind and definitely support the F C C guidelines regarding descriptive video: M M dockett no.99-339.

As a blind person, I feel that I have the same right as everyone else to enjoy what is happening on the T V screen. I become very frustrated when trying to watch T V with the long silences that sometimes occur with no explanation. It is also frustrating when a commercial comes on or there are closings which are written on the screen. Not being able to see what is written, I miss out on these commercials and announcements. I feel I have a right to be able to get such information and descriptive video would help me to do so.

Please consider these needs and allow descriptive video to come into being.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Grace Lodico

Anne Fesh

From: Gary LeGates [legates@smart.net]
Sent: Saturday, March 18, 2000 4:11 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To Whom It May Concern a5t FCC

My name is Gary LeGates and I live at 530 Poplar Avenue, Westminster, MD 21157. I support descriptive video under MM docket number 99-339. This service is important to me because both my wife and I are totally blind and need this service to get the same on-screen information as others get simply from seeing it. Thank you for giving this letter your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Gary LeGates

Anne Fesh

From: Tim Keenan [tkeenan@student.umass.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 12:53 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Name: Timothy Keenan
Address: 60 Hapgood Way Shrewsbury, MA 01545

Status: totally blind

I fully support the American Council of The Blind's efforts to bring more descriptive video to the blind community. I also wish to express my support for the FCC's recent stance on descriptive video (Docket No. 99-339). I am indeed saddened and angered by the National Federation of The Blind's political decision to oppose descriptive video. It is a sad day indeed when blind community leaders elect to hold on to old rivalries rather than promote the common good of the blind.

Sincerely,
Tim Keenan
tkeenan@student.umass.edu

Anne Fesh

From: tim cumings [thc@world.std.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 10:06 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Thomas Cumings
1662 Commonwealth Avenue #62
Brighton Ma 02135

I am a blind United States citizen and I support whole-heartedly the
Federal Communications Commission's proposed rules for descriptive video
(MM Docket No. 99-339).

Anne Fesh

From: KaeAnn Rausch [karaus@mediaone.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 6:05 AM
To: info@acb.org
Cc: Jerry Berrier
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

I can't begin to express how important this topic is to those of us unable to experience video communication as fully sighted consumers! So much of what is communicated in the media is targetted to the sense of sight that, for those of us deficient in this sense, comprehension and enjoyment are impossible...except with the aid of audeo description! This invaluable technology provides access for thousands of blind and partially sighted people who are otherwise excluded from the majority of what television, cinema and live theatre have to offer. Please support the efforts of those striving to make equal accessibility a reality for those of us challenged by blindness and vision impairment. This technology, utilized with other important adaptive technologies such as closed captioning, will help to make our world more accessible to all persons, regardless of disability. Thanks, in advance, for your enthusiastic support!

Anne Fesh

From: Elaine Vining [mev2@usfamily.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 10:32 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Descriptive Video

I support descriptive video and I am blind. I feel that all programming should be like the deaf. My name is Mike Vining and I live at 5257 Logan Ave No, Minneapolis, MN 55430. I want to support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No. 99-339.

Mike Vining

Anne Fesh

From: Berna Specht [BERNA@HIWAAY.NET]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 10:53 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

I am writing in support of proposed descriptive video MM docket 99-339.

I am a VI senior citizen who enjoys the details furnished by the video describer. Although I can see much of the broad actions, I do not get the minute details such as expressions, and the written messages.

I do enjoy C-SPAN, but am frustrated when the name of the speaker is flashed on the screen but not spoken. If it is advisable that the sighted viewer be reminded of the identity of the speaker, could it not be just as interesting to the blind or VI viewer to know?

I appreciate the fact that the Federal Communication Commission has proposed rules for making television broadcasts accessible to blind and visually impaired users.

Berna Specht
378 Pinehurst Dr.
Talladega, AL 35160

Anne Fesh

From: Ann McCay [annmccay@home.com]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 10:29 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

My name is Ann McCay
6519 20 Avenue, N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115.

I am blind and support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Thank you.

Ann McCay
E-mail: annmccay@home.com

Anne Fesh

From: judy [jsterlin@suffolk.lib.ny.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 2:13 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

to The Federal Communication Commission,

My name is Judy Sterling. I live in New York, Long Island and I am totally blind. I have had the opportunity to experience the Descriptive Video Service and I have found it to be very helpful in understanding of a movie. This access to the visual information on the screen allows me to enjoy a movie as a person with vision does just by simply watching the screen.

I am in full support of this type of adaption for all persons who are blind or visually impaired.
My address is 17 Grove Pl. Babylon, NY 11702.

Sincerely,

Judy Sterling

President of the American Council of the Blind Suffolk County Long Island

Anne Fesh

From: Winifred Downing [wdowning@primenet.com]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 11:46 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptivevideo

I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video (MM docket No. 99-339). I am a blind person who is deprived of the enjoyment and information that comes from most television programs because I live alone and have no one to tell me about the screen. I am Winifred Downing, 1587 38th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94122.

Anne Fesh

From: Marcie Brink [mbrink@complink.net]

Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 1:57 AM

To: info@acb.org

Subject: I support descriptive video

I am writing to say that I am blind and for that matter, a member of ACB and I support descriptive video and want it to be available for all programs that are traditionally captioned currently for the deaf. If the deaf community has access to television in a form which they can use, we as blind people should have the same access. Please note that I support MM Docket No.99-339.

Marcie Brink
1013 Sheridan Drive
Kalamazoo, MI 49001-4425.

Anne Fesh

From: Boaz, Susan [Susan.Boaz@mail.va.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 6:47 AM
To: 'Info@ACB.org'
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

Writer: Susan Boaz, 8715 1st Avenue, Apartment 1418C, Silver Spring, MD
20910; phone:
301-589-0889.

I support the FCC's Proposed Rules for Descriptive Video, Docket No. MM 99339. I am blind and believe I should have the same access to television programs as other people have including those who are profoundly deaf. Also, the National Federation of the Blind does not represent all blind people, and it definitely does not represent me. I am a member of the American Council of the Blind and belong to the American Council of the Blind of Maryland and am Acting Treasurer of our Silver Spring chapter called National Capital Area Chapter.

Thank you for considering my comments on this important matter.

Anne Fesh

From: Sheehan, Pat [Pat.Sheehan@mail.va.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 7:23 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am writing to indicate my strong support of the FCC proposed rules on descriptive video docket MM 99339. This is a step in the right direction and I applaud the FCC for taking the initiative to make descriptive video for television programs a reality. It is impossible for me to over-state the benefits that this would bring to my life. If you have any further questions please contact Patrick Sheehan 14311 Astrodome Drive, Silver Spring MD 20906 (work) 202-273-6543 or (home) 301-598-2131.

Anne Fesh

From: Michelle Douglas [michelledo@mail.drs.state.wv.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 1:03 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Michelle Douglas and my address is 860 Greenbrier Street Saint Albans WV 25177. I am blind and wanted to show my support for the FCC
> > proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.
> >This will afford people who are blind equal access to more programming
> which was previously not accessible. *

Anne Fesh

From: Dee Clayton [clayton.dee@blind.state.ia.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 2:51 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: descriptive video

My name is Delia Clayton and by email address is clayton.dee@blind.state.ia.us
I am writing about the Federal Communications Commission 99-339. There are a lot of blind people that I know including myself that would like to have more programs with descriptive video. I feel that this is as much our right as for the deaf people to have close caption for many programs. No, I do not know anything about the cost but I feel it could not be that much more than the close caption. There has been many times that I have wished that a program would have been described for me. When you live alone you do not have someone to tell you what is going on. Even when you live with someone they are not always watching the same thing you are and cannot be expected to be at your beck and call to help. I sincerely hope that you will make it possible for more programs and movies to be in descriptive video.
Thank you. Delia Clayton

Anne Fesh

From: Daniel B. Tonge [dtonge@mindspring.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 2:25 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video Service

I am totally blind and have been since birth. I support DVS because a great deal of the import and meaning of television and movie content is visual. I didn't even realize how much information I had been missing until I was able to listen to the PBS DVS programming and movies with DVS. Even something as small as the credits in movies is informative, and something which sighted people take for granted. They can choose to attend to or not attend to that kind of information. Without DVS, we as blind people don't have the choice of whether or not to attend to any information other than the direct audio in the programming.

Address:
2612 NW 58th Street, #1
Seattle, WA 98107
Phone: 206-783-4755

Dan

Anne Fesh

From: Robert M. Jacobs [rjacobs@world.std.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 12:57 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

March 14, 2000

I wish to voice my opinion that descriptive video should be an integral part of television production in order to provide equal access to this media to all Americans. I am totally blind and since television is an important source of information and entertainment for me, I believe that it is important to allow me to enjoy the same freedom to access this media that the sighted community takes for granted. Before losing my sight, I applauded the industry's efforts to make closed caption available to the deaf community for these same reasons. Please have me on record as personally supporting the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Robert M. Jacobs
1056 Beacon Street, unit 3
Brookline, Mass. 02446
(617) 739-6471

Anne Fesh

From: Sharon Fridley [sharonf@mail.drs.state.wv.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 3:31 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

My name is Sharon Fridley, and not only am I a blind person myself, but I also hear from several other blind people who are citizens of my state. I support the FCC in its proposed rules regarding descriptive video services on television networks, not only for purposes for enhancing entertainment, but also to make accessible information regarding emergencies and other newsworthy items. I support mm docket No. 99-339.
Thank you.

Sharon Fridley, Program Consultant
Information and Referral Service for the Blind
West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services
State Capitol, Box 50890
Charleston, WV 25305-0890
sharonf@mail.drs.state.wv.us

(304) 766-4891

Anne Fesh

From: Sharon Strzalkowski [strzal@bicnet.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 4:08 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Sharon Strzalkowski
127 June St., Apt. 3
Worcester, MA 01602

I support the FCC rules that govern descriptive video, and look forward to more inclusion of this technology on TV shows that have formerly been out of reach for me as a totally blind person.

Anne Fesh

From: Walter Siren [wsiren@home.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 4:26 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive vicio

Walter siren
2354 Mendez Dr.
New Orleans LA 70122
Dear sir:

I am blind, and my wife and daughter are also blind, and we support the FCC's rules mm docket no. 99-339. Many times when we are listening to tv, and it gets silent, we would like to know what is going on.
Walter

Anne Fesh

From: Mann, Jean [G30770@dfa.state.ny.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 2:47 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: i support descriptive video

I am writing this in support of FCC proposed rules for descriptive video, Docket No. 99-339.

As a totally blind person, I find it very frustrating to tune into a television program, only to find that some action which I couldn't see was critical to the plot of the story. And then there are those documentaries shown on some of the cable stations which have personal testimonies from the people involved. The names of the people are shown on the screen. I'd like to know who they are.

I occasionally go to the movies with friends. There are oftentimes long periods of time where no one is speaking. I am constantly asking my friends "What's happening now?" or, if I can tell by the sound that a certain action took place "Who did that?" Trying to explain to me what's going on certainly breaks their concentration. While we try to keep our voices down, I'm sure there have been times when other patrons in the theater would like to tell us to be quiet.

More and more I am hearing who is sponsoring closed captioning, and it's my understanding that every TV sold now is required to have the technology included so closed captioning can be made available if needed. I would give anything to be able to turn on my television set, or go to the theater to see a movie of my choice, and know that I would get the full benefit of the program or movie because it would be described. I have a whole collection of the DVS movies described by WGBH in Boston, and I never realized how much I was missing until I got them. How wonderful it would be to be able to walk into a store and buy any movie I wanted and know it would be described.

I would like to thank the FCC for all the work that has been done on behalf of descriptive video so far. I am sorry the television and motion picture industries are so reluctant to provide this service. It is obvious that they won't do it unless forced to do so by law. If only they realized the revenue that could be gained from it.

Please keep working to provide us with more video description. While some blind people claim it's not necessary, I have yet to find one who isn't thrilled with it once they have experienced it.

Thanks again for all the work you have done and continue to do in this endeavor.

Jean Mann
6D Downing Square
Guilderland, New York, 12084

Anne Fesh

From: Ardis Bazyn [abazyn@concentric.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 2:18 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support video description

I am a blind person who wants to support your efforts at getting more descriptive video available. I am referring to the FCC rulings on docket number 99339. Thank you very much.

Ardis Bazyn
500 S. 3rd Street, Apt. H
Burbank, CA 91502
(818) 238-9321

Anne Fesh

From: Richard Scott [rpharley@wt.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 1:30 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Discriptive Video;

Howdy,

This is from Richard and Peggy Scott in Dallas, Texas. We would like FCC to know that the two of us would really like to have Descriptive Video for the Blind.

Thanks
Richard and Peggy Scott rpharley@wt.net

Anne Fesh

From: Kathy Brockman [kbrockman@badgerassoc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 1:24 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

On behalf of the Badger Assn. of the Blind, I would like to offer our support for descriptive video. The Federal Communications Commission has issued proposed rules to require increasing amounts of descriptive video on television. Over time, this would afford blind people expanding access to television programming much in the same way that our friends in the deaf community now enjoy closed captioning. During the next 20 years there will be a significant increase in the number of people with visual impairments who would benefit from this service. As people reach their 50's there is a significant increase in macular degeneration. With the "baby boom" population hitting this age bracket, this is where the increase will occur.

The people from industry say it cannot be done technologically, it costs too much for far too few people, and it infringes on their first amendment rights of freedom of speech. However, people with visual impairments are being denied access to these programs.

I am legally blind and represent an organization of 650 members. About 3/4 of us are blind or visually impaired. We support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Sincerely, Kathy Brockman, President
Badger Assn. of the Blind, 912 N. Hawley Rd. Milwaukee WI 53213, telephone 414-615-0107, FAX 414-615-0168

Anne Fesh

From: Charlene Smyth [charlenes@mail.drs.state.wv.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 1:29 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Charlene R. Smyth
220 Buena Vista Avenue
Clarksburg, WV 26301

I am a person who is blind and supports the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM docket No.99-339.

I have watched some movies and did not like them because of all of the visual action taking place but once I viewed the video via a descriptive video, I found the movie very enjoyable and some of them are now my favorite movies. We also get descriptive videos for children when we have blind children visiting our house and they love watching them and call them "the movie that tells a story."

Anne Fesh

From: efnewell [efnewell@lv.rmci.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 12:02 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support FCC Rules for discriptive video

Fcc
Washington, DC

From: Edwin F. Newell
1921 Oakleaf Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89146

Re: Docket Nr. MM99-339

I am Blind and have not been able to enjoy television because I can no longer follow the story as any sighted person can. Therefore I support the FCC rules for Discriptive vide as outlined in Docket MM 99-339.

I am apalled that an organization which proports to represent blind persons such as the National Federation of the Blind has taken the position the Blind People do not want Discriptive Video. Be assured that this organization doesnot represent me

Anne Fesh

From: Betsy Whitney [brailleit@aloha.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 5:54 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Betsy Whitney and I live at:
137 Kuakolu Place
Hilo, HI 96720

I am a person who has been blind for 44 years and support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

There are many things that are unavailable to people who are blind, and this is an opportunity to solve one of them. Please let us have Equal Access to television!

Betsy Whitney

end of message

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Anne Fesh

From: Jim Vaglia [jimjv@home.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 11:12 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: Support of FCC descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Mr. James J. Vaglia
2926 Brentwood Ave.
Pittsburgh Pa 15227
412 881-0526

To whom it may concern:

If television networks can afford to give money away to game show contestants then they can afford to provide descriptive services for television programming.

Sincerely,

Jim Vaglia

Anne Fesh

From: J. Eric Pridmore [jpridmore@nac.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 10:25 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

To: Federal Communications Commission, US Federal Government

From: J. Eric Pridmore
53 Summerfield Road
Belvidere, NJ 07823

Date: March 14, 2000

Subject: FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339

I am writing in support of the proposed rule change by the FCC to make descriptive video widely available for all television consumers. I support these rule changes as a blind person and as a concerned US citizen. I urge the FCC to ignore the voices of self-interest and bottom-lines and push forward with this significant proposal that will improve the lives of many.

Descriptive video will begin to include into our citizenry so many who have been excluded and marginalized from mainstream America because they cannot adequately access this media form. Please push forward and approve the rules that will bring about descriptive video. I thank in advance for your support.

Eric Pridmore

J. Eric Pridmore
jpridmore@nac.net

Anne Fesh

From: Barbara Rhodes [brhodes@pacbell.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:58 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is:

Barbara Rhodes
6396 Tamalpais Avenue
San Jose, CA 95120
(408) 268-2110

I am blind and support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

Thank you for understanding how very important this ruling is to persons in the blindness/visually impaired community, but it will also be very useful to persons who aren't in front of the screen so they can follow what is happening and be able to follow the programing being presented.

Just as close captioning now allows persons who must mute the sound on their t.v., to be able the follow the program, descriptive video will also benefit members of the viewing public.

Also, with our aging population, this accommodation will be utilized more and more.

Thank you for the time and consideration you will give this matter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Rhodes

Anne Fesh

From: Barry Levine [barrylev@mindspring.com]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 3:29 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I wish to announce to you (The FCC) my support in favor of descriptive video;
MM Docket no. 99-339.

I am blind. "Watching television" is an icon of American behavior and culture. I do not wish to be left out of this, when technology is readily available to support video description. The costs are reasonable, and the accomodation is readily achievable.

Thank you very much.

Barry Levine
13532 Choctaw Trail
Lockport, IL 60441
PH: (708) 301-0242
fax: (708) 570-2790
email: see signature

Barry
mailto:barrylev@mindspring.com>

Anne Fesh

From: Rodney Chard [rchard@uswest.com]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 3:52 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am writing to express my support of FCC MM Docket No. 99-339. I want to thank the FCC for presenting this issue, and ask that descriptive video become mandatory. My name is Rod Chard, I live at 7150 S. Pennsylvania Steet, Littleton, CO 80122, my phone is 303-730-1353, my e-mail is echard@uswest.net, and I am low vision (leagally blind). Access to television will enrich my life, as well as the lives of others who cannot visually use television. Today, television is a main social component of life in America. To be dinied access to this medium makes me in effect a second class citizen, unable to socialize at work when the main topic of conversation is the show or movie that was on last night. In addition, documentaries and mini-series can teach me about history and sociology. Most people in this country can become fairly well educated just from selective television viewing. A blind citizen must take formal courses at school for the same effect. Without the ability to understand "quiet passages" in television, much of the information is lost. Please consider my reality, matching that of most blind people, as final decisions are made. Thank you.

Anne Fesh

From: Jo Taliaferro [whitsma@concentric.net]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 3:43 PM
To: info@acb.org
Cc: blindser@iserv.net
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO!!!!

Hello,

I am referencing Document no. M. 9939. My name is Jo Taliaferro and I am a funder of DVS and support it as a blind individual who wants the same rights to information and recreation as everyone else!

Why should the people who can't hear have closed captioning and the visually impaired have less because they can't see the screen of a television???

Yes, there are radios with capability of producing the SOUND of TV to a limited extent but that does not provide equal access!!! I want DVS so I can live with dignity and independence, well-rounded in knowledge and information and able to converse with my peers on a level which indicates that I know about the audible programming as well as the visual effects!!

Sincerely,

Jo Taliaferro

President, board of Trustees

Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Jo and Whit

whitsma@concentric.net

Anne Fesh

From: LaDonna Seliger [dseliger@worldnet.att.net]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 4:01 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

Importance: High

3912 Southeast Fifth Street
Des Moines, IA 50315-2803
March 13, 2000

Mr. Charles Crawford, Executive Director
American Council of the Blind
1155 - 15th Street NW, Suite 1004
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Charlie:

In response to your message concerning descriptive video and the FCC ruling, the following is my response:

I am writing as a blind individual and also as president of the Iowa Council of the United Blind. I feel if PBS can produce excellent programming with description for the blind and visually impaired, then it shouldn't be that difficult for movie studios to do the same as pictures are being produced. Furthermore, there are already a small number of movies already on the market with the video description included.

I believe blind persons have the right to have as much description available to them as the deaf have closed captioning.

The Iowa Council of the United Blind would like to thank the Federal Communications Commission for its proposed ruling and strongly encourage the passage of the ruling.

Sincerely,

Donna Seliger, President
Iowa Council of the United Blind

Anne Fesh

From: Atwater, Terry [TAtwater@ESD.WA.GOV]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 4:49 PM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

My name is Terry Atwater. My home address is: 505 Division St. NW, Olympia, WA 98502.

I am totally blind and am very much in favor of the FCC's proposed regulations regarding descriptive video. I support mm docket no.99-339.

I find that descriptive video greatly enhances enjoyment of television programs and movies. It makes the experience more alive and interactive. It gives the listening experience more depth and creates a texture that is not unlike reading a novel. Now television programs have long periods of action sequences or periods of silence, that is when no dialogue is spoken, and it is very hard to know what is happening. Shows of all types rely more and more on what is seen rather than on what is heard. When programs are video described the show is so much more meaningful and one doesn't have to wonder what really happened.

Anne Fesh

From: Liz Hare [eh51@cornell.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 4:21 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I have found that descriptive video makes a great deal of difference in my ability to understand television programs and films. However, I have been continually frustrated that handful of described television shows are on PBS, and there aren't many movies available, either. Yet, most television programs are closed-captioned for the hearing impaired. Why is our need for access less crucial?

On the Weather Channel, local weather reports and forecasts are presented only visually with accompanying music. There is no way for a blind person to access this data.

The action in many movies and television shows is critical to understanding stories or educational points.

The population of people with vision problems is growing due to the increasing number of elderly people with degenerative visual conditions.

I don't own a television. There's nothing on that's very interesting to me, because access to the information is so limited. I would not pay a cable company for access to the current programming. To have me as a customer, they will need to adapt.

Liz Hare
Liz Hare
Postdoctoral Associate
Animal Breeding and Genetics Group
B47 Morrison Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
(607) 255 2380
eh51@cornell.edu

Anne Fesh

From: Cindy Hollis [cindy@sinclair.net]
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 4:51 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

Cindy Hollis
6686 Capricorn Ln. N.E.

Bremerton, WA 98311

March 13, 2000

To the Federal Communications Commission:

I am writing in support of the FCC's proposed rules for Descriptive Video, Docket no. 99-339.

I am a totally blind, mother of two, working full time and going to school part time. I believe that I should have equal access to the programming through the medium of television that is available to most every other American. I find great enjoyment in watching movies with Descriptive Video Service available, and I know if this service were also available with all television programming as well, I would also find a greater enjoyment in watching TV.

I am not a member of the National Federation of the Blind and find it very disheartening to know that they are making strong statements against Descriptive Video, as proposed by the FCC. More importantly, they are sending a misleading message that they represent the majority of blind people. I don't know who they speak for, but I do know, they do not speak for me!

Thank you for your support of Descriptive Video, and I implore you not to give up the fight!

Sincerely,

Cindy Hollis

Anne Fesh

From: miriam@netcom.com
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2000 5:21 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

My name is Miriam Vieni and my address is 515 Oxford Street Westbury, NY 11590. I am a blind person and as such, I strongly support the FCC proposed rules for Descriptive Video MM Docket No.99-339.

I have found the small amount of descriptive video that is available on PBS educational and enjoyable. Without descriptive video, I do not watch TV because I realize how much I miss when I do not have access to its visual content. I believe that as someone who wishes to participate in every possible way in the world around me, I should have access to a medium that my sighted peers take for granted. The FCC proposed rules provide me with this opportunity.

Miriam Vieni, C.S.W.
New York Home Study Service
Phone: 516-333-4999
Website: <http://www.techease.com/nyhomestudy>
Email: miriam@netcom.com
Fax: 516-876-8246

Anne Fesh

From: Huhn, Dan R. [huhndr@Maritz.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:30 AM
To: 'info@acb.org'
Subject: I support descriptive video

Hello,

I am a blind individual and I support the FCC proposed rules for descriptive video MM Docket No.99-339.

I can't believe that the NFB disagrees with this important issue. Maybe, none of them are interested in movies and television, or maybe its time for them to step down and allow people who are interested in the future and the many advances for the blind which lay before us. They should be grasping these advances not pushing them away.

But I believe that the majority of blind and visually impaired persons believe as I do, that we also have the right to fully enjoy whatever media, such as movies and television, other people take for granted as their right.

Thank you very much,

Daniel R. Huhn
14 Willow Rock Place
Fenton, MO 63026

huhndr@maritz.com

Anne Fesh

From: Debbie Potocki [debpot@na2k.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 7:13 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I Support Descriptive Video

March 14, 2000
Debbie Potocki
7 Railroad Ave. B-209
Washington, NJ 07882

To Womever It May Concern:

I am writing to you today as a totally blind person who wishes to thank the FCC for issuing proposed rules MM Docket No.99-339 which would provide for video description of regular network TV programing. I live alone and although I enjoy watching television, it is often very difficult to follow the action in a program when there is only laughter, silence or dramatic music and no dialog to indicate to me what is happening. My enjoyment of television would be that much more enhanced if video description was included in network programming. Many times I lose interest in the program because I cannot completely follow it. I have resorted to calling someone on the phone hoping that they are watching the same program in order to ascertain what is going on.

Therefore, I ask that the members of the Motion Picture Association, The National Association of Broadcasters, Direct TV, The Cable TV Association and all others concerned with this matter please consider my situation and that of the hundreds of thousands of persons who are blind or visually impaired. All we want is equal access to the same things in life that our sighted family, friends and neighbors do including watching television, yes, I said, watching television! Thank you very much for your anticipated consideration and I look forward to the day when I can watch TV, know what is happening, when it's happening and discuss a program with my colleagues at work without having to depend on someone else who hopefully is watching the same program!

Respectfully Yours,

Debbie Potocki

Anne Fesh

From: John Melson [Jmelson1@ix.netcom.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2000 9:22 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

I am not good at sending letters, but I would like to have my vote counted in supporting descriptive video. My wife I are the only ones in this household who very much appreciate descriptive video since neither of us have any sight for determining what is going on during those silent portion of a movie or drama.

Sincerely,

John and Anne Melson

Anne Fesh

From: Judy D. Goldman [judyd01@home.com]
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 8:56 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I SUPPORT DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO

MY NAME IS JUDY GOLDMAN. MY ADDRESS IS 916 BRIDGEVIEW AVE., WHITE OAK,
PA. 15131.

I AM BLIND AND I DO SUPPORT THE FCC PROPOSED RULING FOR DESCRIPTIVE
VIDEO, MM DOCKET #99-339.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A MISCONCEPTION THAT BLIND INDIVIDUALS ARE NOT
INTERESTED IN DESCRIPTIVE VIDEO. I PERSONALLY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE
OPTION.

THANK YOU,

JUDY GOLDMAN

END

Anne Fesh

From: Anne Fesh [info@acb.org]
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 9:26 AM
To: Anne Fesh
Subject: FW: forwarded I support DVS message

-----Original Message-----

From: Kim Charlson [mailto:KLCHARLSON@delphi.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2000 10:48 PM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: forwarded I support DVS message

My purpose in writing this quick message is to support the FCC proposed rules for Descriptive Video for blind movie/TV viewers. I have noticed a trend toward an increase in the video aspects of screen entertainment. In these times, it is important to increase accessibility. The technical ability to provide this access is readily achievable and is not outrageously expensive. Any questions regarding this matter should be addressed to:

brian langlois
18 Hunter's run place
Haverhill, ma 01832
(978) 374-2577
(978) 521-2626 (fax)
langlois@world.std.com

Brian Langlois

Anne Fesh

From: Terri Goldstein [terrig@tampabay.rr.com]
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 10:00 AM
To: Susan LaVenture; info@acb.org; ecfs@fcc.gov
Subject: Descriptive Video for the Visually Impaired - MM Docket # 99-339

Magalie Roman Salas, Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street SW TW-A325
Washington, D.C. 20554

To All Concerned:

I am writing this letter in support of the descriptive video rules under MM Docket # 99-339. My name is Terri Goldstein and I am the parent of a nine year old girl named Julia. Julia was born with cataracts and glaucoma in both eyes and is visually impaired. You may think of these diseases as relevant only to the elderly in our country, however they affect children as well.

My daughter accomodates well. That means she makes up for her vision loss by using her other senses more adeptly. For example, in physical education at school, her coach gives her verbal cues directing her how to run the relay course. His verbal cues enhance what she sees, because basically she is a visual learner.

Julia already knows about descriptive videos and undoubtedly would benefit from having this technology everyday -- not just for entertainment purposes. I took Julia to see the Broadway show Annie. Prior to the show, I took her back stage to see the props. Then during the show, I narrated to her -- for example - "the yellow doll house is onstage; President Roosevelt rolled onto stage in his wheelchair." It made the difference for Julia.

There are blind consumers of all ages, interests, etc. However, the most important issue is that people have the opportunity to use whatever tools might be available to enhance accessibility and understanding of the visual world. Regardless of what some blind consumer groups may say -- every person has a right to choose for themselves if they want to employ descriptive video.

Let's not take a step backwards. We need to use all available technologies to provide maximum accessibility for all citizens of our country, regardless of how few or how many. Please -- give our children better accessibility than previous generations had.

Sincerely,

Terri Elise Goldstein
813-251-2407 (days)
813-264-0847 (evenings)

Anne Fesh

From: Adam Ruschival [adam3@iglou.com]
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 10:06 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video!

My name is Adam Ruschival (148 Vernon Avenue, Louisville, KY 40206; 1-502-897-1472). I strongly support the efforts of the Federal Communications Commission's proposed rules to make descriptive video available to the blind and visually impaired. When I was in grade school, I vividly remember my mother's attempts to describe what was happening on television shows because I was totally blind and could not see the screen. I have a blind friend who once watched a movie on TV. The last ten minutes of the movie involved a "chase scene" and had only music (no speech) to end the show. This friend wondered ten years what happened at the end and finally was able to rent the movie and watch it with a sighted person to describe it to satisfy her curiosity.

Now that the technology for descriptive video is advanced and tested, the two situations described above would not have to exist today. The cost to video producers would not have to be any more than that already provide to hearing impaired people through closed captioning.

I worked at the Kentucky Talking Book Library for the Blind and Handicapped for fourteen years, and am currently finishing my twelfth year at the Kentucky School for the Blnind Instructional Materials Resource Center. Since I am totally blind, and since I have worked to provide information to blind consumers for the past twenty-six years, I believe that I know how much descriptive video would mean to me, and how much support there is by other blind people for the FCC proposed descriptive video rules on the MM Docket NO99--339.

Thank you for permitting me to have this opportunity to express my support for descriptive video

Adam Ruschival, KIMRC Manager
Member of the American Council of the Blind

y

Anne Fesh

From: stanlopez@mindspring.com
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 10:20 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Discriptive Videos!

I am Blind, and I do support the FCC proposed ruling for Descriptive Video,
MM Docket 99-339.

Sincerely
Mr. Stanley Lopez
3604 Seelye Dr.
Augusta GA
30906

"The truths we learn about are selves, is the starting point, to better
understand those truths we must face in life:

"My friend, I wish you to have love, peace, and much laughter in your
journey through life! Cheers!!"

Mr. Stanley Lopez
Voice Mail: 1-888-610-7909
Extension (3381)
Email-1: stanlopez@mytalk.com
Email-2: stanlopez@mindspring.com

Anne Fesh

From: Peggy Peak [peggy@iglou.com]
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 10:17 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support descriptive video

Peggy Peak 2821 Pomeroy Dr. Louisville, Ky. 40218. I as a blind person, support fcc's proposed rules for descriptive video for the blind. mm docket no.99-339. We would like to know what is happening on the screen when it is all visual. thank you.

Anne Fesh

From: Heather E Bennett [heatherb@frontiernet.net]
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2000 11:06 AM
To: info@acb.org
Subject: I support Descriptive Video

Name: Heather Bennett
Address: PO. Box 19589 Statesboro, GA 30460
I am blind and I do support the FCC proposed ruling for descriptive video MM Docket #99-339.