



NEWS RELEASE

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CABLE DUAL-CARRIAGE REQUIREMENTS WILL HURT CONSUMERS *FCC Rules Could Force Some Programmers Off the Air*

Pittsburgh, February 7, 2008 – The American Cable Association (ACA) voiced its support today for six cable programmers that filed suit against the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) “dual-must-carry” rule on the grounds that it is a first amendment violation. ACA, which represents more than 1,100 independent cable operators from around the United States, also urged the FCC to approve an exemption for small and often rural operators with limited cable system capacity and a small subscriber base.

“The ACA supports the efforts of C-SPAN, Discovery Communications and others that are contesting the legality of ‘dual-must-carry’ rules,” said Matthew M. Polka, ACA president and CEO. “These rules place a tremendous burden on independent cable operators and may in some cases force programmers off of the system, and in other cases prevent an operator from carrying new channels on cable systems with limited system capacity. The FCC should not pick and choose which stations are available and which are expendable. Customers and their communities will end up as the unintended casualties of this regulation.

“The FCC’s dual-carriage rule, as it stands today, puts an unreasonable and unnecessary strain on small operators’ system capacity,” Polka continued. “The requirement, which does not include an exemption for even the smallest operators in terms of MHz or subscribers, will force hundreds of operators to either drop channels their customers want to watch or prevent the addition of new channels, in order to carry duplicates of channels they already offer, all while costing each operator tens of thousands of dollars in equipment upgrades. Capacity constraints coupled with the cost of compliance will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for small cable operators to carrying broadcast stations in both analog and digital. We urge the FCC to take steps to fix this problem.”

Under the current dual-must-carry rule, cables operators of systems with less than 552 MHz may apply for a hardship waiver from the FCC; however, the legal fees associated with that process can be thousands of dollars and are difficult for small operators to afford

[About the American Cable Association](#)

Based in Pittsburgh, the American Cable Association is a trade organization representing 1,100 smaller and medium-sized, independent cable companies who provide broadband services for more than 7 million cable subscribers primarily located in rural and smaller suburban markets across America. Through active participation in the regulatory and legislative process in Washington, D.C., ACA's members work together to advance the interests of their customers and ensure the future competitiveness and viability of their business. For more information, visit www.americancable.org

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