

July 14, 2014

Senator John Thune
SD-511
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Thune,

I appreciate this opportunity to share the thoughts of the Institute for Policy Innovation (IPI) on the reauthorization of the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act (STELA). IPI has for years studied the complexities of communications policy and advocates a light touch regulatory approach that encourages innovation and experimentation in the marketplace, and that trusts consumers and markets to determine outcomes.

Given the technological changes in the video marketplace over the last few years, it's clear that reform of video regulation is overdue. In a free-market, like products and services should be regulated alike, so if products or services are interchangeable or substitutable to consumers, they should be treated alike by regulation.

That certainly isn't the case today, with entirely different pieces of legislation dividing the video marketplace into categories based on delivery technology.

But synthesizing all of these disparate regulatory regimes, eliminating outdated distinctions and streamlining regulation in general will be a complex task, and one that should not be done haphazardly or in response to imminent deadlines. To get it right will require careful examination of the marketplace and fully informed deliberation about solutions.

That's why the upcoming reauthorization of STELA should not be considered a vehicle for bits of regulatory change, and why IPI advocates passage of a simple date-change "clean" reauthorization of STELA in anticipation of future video reform, which we hope will be a priority in the next Congress.

We will be delighted to work with you at that time on video reform, as well as in other communications and technology policy issues as they arise.

Sincerely,



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