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**CONTACT:**

[Robert C. Kenny](#)

202-412-0976

[Follow me](#)

[TVfreedom.org](http://TVfreedom.org)

## **TVFREEDOM.ORG ISSUES STATEMENT ON MEDIACOM PETITION TO FCC ON RETRANSMISSION CONSENT**

**Washington, D.C.** – In response to a [letter](#) from Mediacom to the Federal Communications Commission regarding retransmission consent, the following statement can be attributed to Robert C. Kenny, Director of Public Affairs, TVfreedom.org:

"It takes a lot of nerve on Mediacom's part to file such a self-serving petition to 'fix' retransmission consent without acknowledging its own legacy of abusive treatment of consumers. For the record, the [American Customer Service Index](#) has found the pay-TV industry is the most disliked business sector in America. Moreover, Mediacom tied for **dead last** with ATVA member Time Warner Cable as the worst pay-TV company. So maybe Mediacom and ATVA should look in the mirror if they are truly concerned with the plight of consumers.

"Consumers like local TV – as evidenced by the popularity of local news and broadcast network programming. What they don't like is lousy Mediacom-style customer service, bait-and-switch pay TV billing practices, excessive early termination fees, and outrageous equipment rental fees that cost subscribers more than \$7 billion annually. Real change requires true commitment on the part of Mediacom and other ATVA members to improve the current sorry state of pay-TV customer service in America."

### **Background**

- The fact of the matter is that hundreds of retransmission consent deals reached each year without any programming disruptions to pay-TV customers. The few retransmission consent disputes that occur are often settled very quickly, within a day or two of the TV blackout. We believe that ATVA is making a mountain out of a mole hill on this issue. There were 13 retransmission consent disputes last year and there have been nine this year, to date.

- In 2014, cable led the entire media and entertainment industry with an eye-popping 41 percent profit margin, while the satellite TV industry was a close second with an annual profit margin of 26 percent. America's big pay-TV companies are ringing up billions of dollars in profits year after year.

- Pay-TV operators collectively rake in more than \$7 billion annually in equipment rental

fees alone from customers. To put this in perspective, the monthly cost to rent just one HD DVR as part of a paid TV subscription package is \$16 per month – that's nearly four times what it costs to receive the full complement of broadcast TV channels.

- The latest data shows that, on average, TV programming is costing each pay-TV subscriber \$46.93 per month. Of that amount, 90.3 percent or (\$42.39) of the cost is attributable to cable programming fees, even though the most watched shows are on broadcast channels. Link to pay-TV programming cost projections:

<http://www.tvfreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Cable-vs-RSN-vs-broadcast-fees1.pdf>

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### **About Us**

TVfreedom.org, is a coalition of local broadcasters, community advocates, network television affiliate associations, multicast networks, manufacturers and other independent broadcaster-related organizations committed to helping protect consumer interests, ensure emergency and weather related [programming access](#), promote the value of broadcast-TV programming, and preserve a fair and free video marketplace.

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