ACA CONNECTS: KEY DEVELOPMENTS

ACA Connects To FCC: It’s More Costly Than You Might Think To Relocate MVPD Earth Stations As Part Of C-Band

ACA Connects submitted comments on May 14 to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) providing a series of important recommendations related to the reimbursement of C-Band incumbents that will incur costs as they vacate a portion of the band to make room for new users, including 5G wireless services.

ACA Connects’ comments responded to a Public Notice of the FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) seeking comment on the preliminary cost category schedule for 3.7 – 4.2 GHz Band relocation expenses (“cost catalog”). This Public Notice has no reply round.

In the FCC’s C-Band order of March 3, the agency made clear that incumbent users of the band who are impacted by its repurposing are entitled to reimbursement of their actual, reasonable relocation costs.

“With our filing, we’re doing our part to help the FCC keep its word to ACA Connects members and other incumbent earth stations users,” ACA Connects President and CEO Matthew M. Polka said. “These users were promised they would be fully reimbursed for their reasonable relocation costs for activities they need to undertake to maintain substantially the same service to their customers during and after the transition as before. We know the FCC meant it.” Read more.

ACA CONNECTS FILING 5/14: FCC Comments re Expanding Flexible Use of the 3.7 to 4.2 GHz Band (Wireless Telecomms. Bureau Seeks Comment on Preliminary Cost Category Schedule for 3.7-4.2 GHz Band Relocation Expenses)

ACA Connects Members Extend FCC’s ‘Keep Americans Connected’ Pledge

ACA Connects President and CEO Matthew M. Polka issued the following statement on May 14 regarding the FCC’s announcement that 774 broadband and telephone providers have taken the ‘Keep Americans Connected’ Pledge and extended that commitment through June 30:
“ACA Connects members have been looking out for their customers and communities long before COVID-19, and all of them will continue to do so long afterward. It’s just the thing that ACA Connects members do. ACA Connects members extending the FCC’s ‘Keep Americans Connected’ Pledge is more proof of this point. In times of trouble, consumers can count on their local small broadband provider.

“ACA Connects, too, has reaffirmed the association’s endorsement of the Pledge through the June 30 extension period.”

ACA Applauds FCC Adoption Of ‘Buying Group’ Provisions In Television Viewer Protection Act Of 2019 (TVPA)

ACA Connects President and CEO Matthew M. Polka issued the following statement on May 13 in connection with the Federal Communications Commission’s release of an order implementing “buying group” provisions in the Television Viewer Protection Act of 2019:

“ACA Connects welcomes the FCC’s decision to implement provisions of the Television Viewer Protection Act that permit buying groups representing smaller multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs) to negotiate retransmission consent agreements with large television broadcasters. The FCC’s action will benefit both the MVPD members of such buying groups and the broadcasters with whom such buying groups negotiate.

“We especially appreciate the FCC’s decision to interpret the key statutory terms ‘large station group’ and ‘qualified MVPD buying group’ in a manner consistent with the statutory text. This decision, unopposed by any party, will ensure that the provision functions as Congress intended.

“We appreciate the FCC’s swift action so operators may take advantage of the provision when renegotiating their contracts set to expire at the end of the year.”

ACA Connects To FCC: Help Our Members Implement Call Authentication On Reasonable Timelines

ACA Connects members are eager to deploy the STIR/SHAKEN call authentication protocol in their IP networks like the country’s largest voice providers, yet they will face considerable challenges in doing so on the exact same timeline. The FCC should adopt its proposed one-year implementation extension for small providers, and it should be prepared to extend the deadline further if circumstances warrant. The agency should also take further steps to enable small providers and their customers to reap the benefits of this technology.

ACA Connects made these points in comments filed with the agency on Friday, May 15. The trade association noted that it has actively participated in the industry’s work to get STIR/SHAKEN off the ground, and its members are eager to deploy the technology in their networks.

“STIR/SHAKEN is a powerful weapon to have in the arsenal in the industry’s fight against robocalls,” ACA Connects President and CEO Matthew M. Polka said. “The technology will build on steps our members are already taking, such as offering free blocking tools, to deliver their customers relief from the robocalls scourge.” Read more.
ACA CONNECTS: WEBINARS

A Discussion with Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.) on COVID-19, Broadband and Beyond for Smaller ISPs!

May 20, 5:00 PM ET

REGISTER NOW

Join ACA Connects and other associations to discuss broadband and technology policy during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond with Rep. McMorris Rodgers, the Ranking Member of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and a Member of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology. She is an advocate of free market ingenuity and ensuring broadband deployment to support our country’s economic growth and prosperity. She is also a leader in the privacy and security space, which has also become more of a focus as businesses and consumers do more and more online work and education.

Rep. McMorris Rodgers, who has served in top leadership posts in the House, is working with her colleagues on an aggressive communications agenda that includes advancing and securing emerging technologies, global data innovation and security and combating harms through innovation. ACA Connects and our partner organizations are pleased to join her for a Zoom conversation!

ACA CONNECTS: CORONAVIRUS BLOGS

(5/7) Communicating In A Crisis Resources
- 10 CEOs on How to Compassionately Communicate Remotely
- Fast Company: How Leaders Can Effectively Communicate During Quarantine
- One Email Every Remote Leader Should Send Every Week

(4/29) Network Performance During The COVID-19 Crisis
- ACA Connects retained the strategy consulting firm, Cartesian, to perform an in-depth analysis. It found that despite the surge in Internet usage, our members’ networks continue to provide the same high-quality experience their customers have come to depend on.

ACA CONNECTS: NEWS HEADLINES

Cable One Splashes Some Cash On Fixed Wireless (Light Reading, 5/12)
Cable One has made "small" investments in two yet-to-be-named fixed wireless companies tied to a plan by Cable One to deliver services to adjacent areas without having to front the costs of a wired network build. Cable One did not identify those investment targets. "We are agnostic on the technology that will deliver broadband into rural America," said Julie Laulis, Cable One's president and CEO, of the company's evolving fixed wireless strategy. "We consider [broadband] our space, so we'll do whatever it takes to bring people the connectivity that they need."
GCI Records 44% Peak Traffic Spike Amid COVID-19 (Light Reading, 5/13)
Networks across the nation have been put to the test in the months since the coronavirus pandemic began. GCI has regularly seen 25% higher-than-normal usage during peak hours throughout the pandemic, with its highest spike coming in late-April, clocking in at a staggering 44% higher-than-normal peak usage. "The numbers we've seen during peak hours are staggering; it's like nothing we've ever experienced before," said Vice President of GCI Product Management Duncan Whitney.

Disney Raises $11 Billion In Debt (The Wrap, 5/12)
Disney has raised $11 billion dollars in new debt, according to a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). "The company intends to use the net proceeds from the sale of the notes for general corporate purposes," the filing read, which include "the repayment of commercial paper" and "the repayment at maturity of the guarantor's 1.800% notes due June 2020 and the guarantor's floating rate notes due June 2020."

Comcast Has Deployed 1M Xfinity Flex Devices (Fierce Video, 5/11)
Comcast Cable CEO Dave Watson said that his company has deployed one million Xfinity Flex devices so far within its service footprint. Flex, which Comcast offers to its broadband-only subscribers, combines a streaming device and a unified platform for free content and third-party streaming services including Netflix and Hulu.

Cubs 'Very Confident' Marquee Will Have Comcast Deal (Cubs Insider, 5/14)
Cubs president of business operations Crane Kenney told season ticket holders during a video chat that he is very confident a deal will be in place as soon as baseball returns. They were actually close back in May before things shut down, he said, though the calculus has changed a wee bit in the time since. Comcast has all the leverage in the world at this point since there’s absolutely no real need to show 15 replays of the Sandberg Game or Kerry Woods 20-strikeout masterpiece.

U.S. Broadcasters Plow Ahead With 'NexGen TV' (Light Reading, 5/15)
U.S TV broadcasters have been forced to rein in some of their plans to light up ATSC 3.0 signals due to pandemic-fueled complications, but many still expect to introduce initial versions of "NextGen TV" in several markets later this year. The deployment of ATSC 3.0 by some major broadcasters was the key theme of a panel session assembled for [last] week's NAB Digital Express, an online event that has taken the place of the canceled NAB Show that was set to happen last month in Las Vegas.

ACa Connects: Action Brief Top Three

Most-Clicked Links From May 6 ACAction Brief:
1. TV Sports To Consumers: Don't Expect To Get A Refund Soon (CNBC, 5/3)
2. Comcast Lost 409,000 Video Subs In First Quarter (Light Reading, 4/30)
3. YouTube Revenue Hits $4 Billion In Q1 (The Wrap, 4/28)

About ACA Connects

Across this vast country, small and rural markets participate in the digital revolution by receiving video, broadband, and phone services from more than 700 small and medium-sized independent operators represented by ACA Connects - America’s Communications Association.

ACA Connects’ members -- cable, phone, and fiber-to-the-home operators and municipalities -- deliver affordable basic and advanced services to nearly 8 million households and businesses. ACA Connects members operate in every state, offering high-definition television, next generation Internet access, and
Access to advanced communications is not a luxury but a critical necessity for consumers and companies, schools and hospitals. America’s economic prosperity in smaller markets and rural areas depends on the growth and success of ACA Connects members, who believe a connected nation, is a united nation.

ACA Connects asks lawmakers and regulators to ensure fair treatment so that small and medium-sized independent operators may continue to supply affordable video, broadband, and phone services to Main Street America. Through active participation in the policymaking process, ACA Connects members and leaders advocate for the interests of their customers, their companies, and their communities to help ensure the continued viability of their way of life in hometown America.

For more information, visit [www.acaconnects.org](http://www.acaconnects.org), or contact:

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