

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mignon Clyburn
Acting Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

The ongoing retransmission consent impasse between CBS and Time Warner Cable has gone beyond the bounds of these by-now all too frequent contract disputes. While I make no judgment regarding the merits of either party's position on the terms of the retransmission of CBS's television signals to Time Warner Cable customers, I must object to CBS's aggressive negotiating tactics which are undermining my constituents' access to legal content.

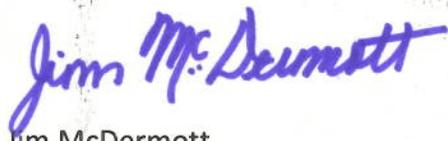
I am deeply troubled by CBS's action in blocking Time Warner Cable broadband internet customers from being able to access CBS.com. As I understand the situation, this means that households who use Time Warner Cable broadband, whether or not they also use Time Warner Cable for their television, are effectively denied access to specific content on the internet.

CBS's action violates the Commission's 2005 Broadband Internet Policy Statement provision that "... consumers are entitled to access the lawful Internet content of their choice," a principle which I believe is firmly rooted in the First Amendment. As a Member of Congress representing Seattle, the home of so many companies and institutions with an important stake in a free and open internet, I am troubled to see internet access being used as a weapon in a commercial contract dispute affecting television.

While I hope that both parties are able to resolve this current impasse, I believe that it is important for the Commission to defend internet freedom and begin to address both the continuing problem of retransmission consent and its effect on internet freedom.

Should you have further questions, please contact me through my Chief of Staff, Diane Shust. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress