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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-3306
September 10, 2007

COMMITTEES:
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
JUDICIARY
RANKING MEMBER,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COURTS,
THE INTERNET, AND INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY

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The Honorable Kevin Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

As you well know, North Carolina is renowned for its successful and diverse sporting history. Although talented athletes ensure that sporting competitions are exciting, fans enable sports to grow through communities and to be passed along to younger generations. By ensuring that fans can access sporting events, we can guarantee that the sporting future of North Carolina will be robust and full of growth.

In July, 2006, your commission wrote, "[t]he Commission recognized that certain programming services, such as sports programming, or marquee programming, such as HBO, may be essential and for practical purposes, 'must haves' for program distributors and their subscribers." [FCC 06-105, July 21, 2006] I agree that sports programming has unique importance for distributors and consumers.

In recent months, I have heard from many disgruntled constituents of mine who would like access to the regional sports network for my district, the Mid-Atlantic Sports Network (MASN). This network is not only the source of nightly Major League Baseball for my constituents, but it televises local North Carolina and other collegiate sports programming. Because of its broad variety of sporting event coverage, which is growing, MASN clearly presents a unique importance for distributors and consumers that cannot be overlooked.

Should this issue come before your commission, I would strongly urge you to reaffirm your support for local sports programming and require the cable companies to carry this important, must-have programming on basic cable.

Sincerely,

HOWARD COBLE
Member of Congress

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