

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader Bob Latta  
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
“Lights, Camera, Subscriptions: State of the Video Media  
Marketplace.”**

**September 13, 2023**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

Good morning, and welcome to today’s educational hearing on the state of the video marketplace. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today who represent a wide range of viewpoints across the industry.

The video marketplace is rapidly changing. For over half a century, Americans viewed video programming one way – on a television in their homes. But the advent of Internet-connected TVs and devices allowed for the launch of streaming platforms to provide new choices for consumers

beyond an over-the-air antenna, a satellite dish, or a cable box.

Americans are no longer tethered to a rigid TV schedule. Today, viewers can choose where and when they watch TV, whether it's at home, on the go, and everywhere in between.

This industry shift has ushered in an era of endless possibilities, redefining how we entertain, educate, and inform ourselves.

Today, consumers have unprecedented access to high-quality content. Statistics show Americans' preferences are changing as streaming becomes an easy and affordable choice for Americans.

For the first time, streaming providers claimed the largest portion of U.S. video viewership in July 2022. At that time, streaming viewership represented 34.8 percent of TV viewership while cable subscriptions represented 34.4 percent. In the same report published this month, streaming's share hit a new high of 38.7 percent of TV viewership, while cable's share fell to 29.6 percent. This shows that consumers continue to cut their cable subscriptions and move to streaming, or in other words are “cutting the cord.”

Yet, as this media landscape has drastically evolved, the regulatory environment has largely remained the same. The Cable Act - which is over 30 years old - still provides the bedrock framework for TV regulations today.

Burdensome regulations, including media ownership restrictions, retransmission consent, and must-carry requirements, are just a few of the regulations that constrain cable, satellite, and broadcasters.

With the introduction of streaming services, we must resist the temptation to impose more regulations on a competitive, innovative industry. The largely unregulated streaming marketplace has allowed platforms to flourish and to negotiate deals to provide Americans with unprecedented access to content from local broadcasters, television shows, movies, and other content.

Rather, we should focus on deregulating an overly regulated industry instead of imposing archaic 1990s-era regulations onto a new and vibrant industry.

It is our role in this Committee to determine what is still working, where we can reduce regulations, and how we can support American viewing choice while ensuring local broadcast continues to thrive.

Today's hearing is just the beginning of this conversation. With the various changes in the industry, this hearing provides an opportunity for Congress to learn about:

- Issues with the laws and regulations pertaining to Multichannel Video

Programming Distributors (MVPDs) like Comcast and Direct TV, and virtual MVPDs (vMVPDs), like Hulu Live TV, Fubo TV, and YouTube TV.

- The contrast between linear - or scheduled TV- and nonlinear - meaning on-demand content; and
- Outdated laws and regulations that may no longer make sense for today's marketplace.

I look forward to our discussion today and thank our witnesses for their willingness to be here as representations of their industry.

I now recognize my colleague, the Ranking Member of this subcommittee, the gentlelady from California's Seventh District, for her opening statement.