

AMY KLOBUCHAR
MINNESOTA

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RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 5, 2024

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

I write to urge the FCC to finalize rules to prohibit early termination and billing cycle fees imposed on subscribers by cable operators and direct broadcast satellite service providers.

The FCC receives hundreds of complaints from consumers each year about billing practices, and Minnesotans have repeatedly contacted my office about unexpected price increases and high fees on their cable and satellite bills. In particular, early termination fees, which require subscribers to pay a fee for terminating a video services contract prior to its expiration date, and billing cycle fees, which require subscribers to pay for a complete billing cycle even if the subscriber terminates service prior to the end of that billing cycle, place an undue burden on consumers.

Due to circumstances outside one's own control — like moving to a new home or discovering that the quality of service is poorer than expected — subscribers often need to end their long-term television contracts early. They may also find that their plan offers more channels than needed or be surprised by a bill that, after hidden fees are added, raises the price of service beyond their budget.

These fees make it costly for subscribers to switch services during the contract term and force consumers to pay for services they choose not to receive. This can place financial strain on subscribers and limit competition and consumer choice.

I have long fought against early termination fees. During my first year in office, I introduced the *Cell Phone Consumer Empowerment Act* to place limits on early termination fees in wireless contracts. The following year, I testified at an FCC hearing with experts on the use of early termination fees by communications service providers.

Competitive markets work best when consumers have the ability to make the best decisions for themselves and their families. I am pleased the FCC has voted to advance rules to prohibit these billing practices, including early termination fees and billing cycle fees, that penalize subscribers for terminating video service or switching providers. I strongly urge the Commission to adopt these rules and create a fairer marketplace for consumers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Klobuchar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop under the "y" in "Amy".

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator