

Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition



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CERC Praises FCC National Broadband Plan Promotion of Device Competition

A Level Playing Field for Competitive Products

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition (“CERC”) today praised the Federal Communications Commission’s Omnibus Broadband Initiative team for its emphasis on retail device competition in the National Broadband Plan released today. Section 4.2 of the Plan proposes to establish a “level playing field” for competitive devices to operate on Multichannel Video Programming Distribution (“MVPD”) networks.

The Plan rightly concludes that enhanced device competition will aid the adoption of Broadband throughout the United States. Accordingly, it proposes focused action by the Commission to ensure competitive device availability under Section 629 of the Communications Act:

- Immediate steps for equal network support of CableCARD and other retail devices;
- Appropriate discounts on cable bills for consumers who use their own access devices;
- Requiring MVPDs to furnish “gateway” devices whose *sole* function is to support the operation of competitive devices, as cable and DSL modems do now;
- Allow retail devices to signal and acquire “switched digital” channels; and
- Enable fair and expeditious licensing and certification of retail devices.

CERC Executive Director Chris McLean said today, “CERC supports the device competition and other inclusive Broadband initiatives announced today by the FCC. We congratulate the

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entire OBI team on its hard work and accomplishment. CERC and its members look forward to working with our partners in the cable, satellite, and telephone industries toward “win-win” solutions that serve our common customers.”

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About CERC: The Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition (CERC) is a public policy organization consisting of the major retailers of consumer electronics products including Amazon.com, Best Buy, K-Mart, RadioShack, Sears, Target, Walmart, and the leading industry trade associations - National Retail Federation (NRF) and Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA).