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For Immediate Release

**Child Advocacy and Consumer Groups
Tell FCC to Keep Key TV Safeguards for Children**

Overturning Children's TV Act rules will harm kids and be a huge giveaway of public airwaves to broadcast and cable companies

Three leading nonprofit groups working to advance the interests of children in the digital era told the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that its plan to dismantle long-standing safeguards designed to ensure all children have access to quality TV programming will harm American kids. The proposal to jettison guidelines which require broadcast TV stations air a minimum of three hours a week of educational programming on their primary channel and additional programming on multicast channels would significantly reduce the availability of higher quality shows, they explained in a [filing](#) today.

"The FCC seeks to strip away one of the only federal rules that helps both children and parents," explained Jeff Chester, executive director of the Center for Digital Democracy. Chester helped lead the campaign back in the 1990's that led to the current CTA rules. "It is also one of the only concrete public-interest requirements that Congress mandated in exchange for free use of the public airwaves, which allow television stations to earn vast revenues from both advertising and fees paid by cable companies. Just as the GOP FCC majority did when it killed network neutrality, the commission only seems interested in protecting the interests of the big broadcast and cable companies," Chester said.

"The Commission's proposal would effectively eliminate children's programming on broadcast television, where at least there are some limits on commercialism," said Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood executive director Josh Golin. "Internet and mobile platforms for children are rife with many types of unfair and deceptive marketing that aren't allowed on kids' TV. Rather than facilitating a race to the bottom, the FCC should work with lawmakers and the FTC to develop cross-platform rules to ensure all children access to quality, commercial-free media regardless of the platforms and devices their families own."

Without citing any evidence about the quality, cost and availability of children's educational programs delivered by other means, the FCC claims that because children can watch children's educational programs on cable, YouTube, Netflix, Amazon and Hulu, commercial television stations should not be required to air children's educational programming. But in comments drafted by the Georgetown Law Communications and Technology Clinic, the advocates note, "To use non-broadcast services, households must have access to cable or broadband service, and

be able to afford subscription fees and equipment. Children who live in rural areas, or whose families are low-income, and cannot access or afford alternative program options, will be hurt the most” if the FCC proposal is adopted.

The three groups—Center for Digital Democracy, Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, and the Benton Foundation—pledged to educate the public, including parents, educators and concerned citizens, so they can raise concerns with the FCC and other policy makers.