§611. Closed-captioning of public service announcements

Any television public service announcement that is produced or funded in whole or in part by any agency or instrumentality of Federal Government shall include closed captioning of the verbal content of such announcement. A television broadcast station licensee—

(1) shall not be required to supply closed captioning for any such announcement that fails to include it; and

(2) shall not be liable for broadcasting any such announcement without transmitting a closed caption unless the licensee intentionally fails to transmit the closed caption that was included with the announcement.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VII, §711, as added Pub. L. 98–549, §8, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2804; amended Pub. L. 101–336, title IV, §402, July 26, 1990, 104 Stat. 369.)

AMENDMENTS

1990—Pub. L. 101–336 amended section generally, substituting provisions relating to closed-captioning of public service announcements for provisions relating to establishment, functions, composition, etc., of Telecommunications Policy Study Commission.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 60 days after Oct. 30, 1984, except where otherwise expressly provided, see section 9(a) of Pub. L. 98–549, set out as a note under section 521 of this title.

§612. Syndicated exclusivity

(a) The Federal Communications Commission shall initiate a combined inquiry and rulemaking proceeding for the purpose of—

(1) determining the feasibility of imposing syndicated exclusivity rules with respect to the delivery of syndicated programming (as defined by the Commission) for private home viewing of secondary transmissions by satellite of broadcast station signals similar to the rules issued by the Commission with respect to syndicated exclusivity and cable television; and

(2) adopting such rules if the Commission considers the imposition of such rules to be feasible.

(b) In the event that the Commission adopts such rules, any willful and repeated secondary transmission made by a satellite carrier to the public of a primary transmission embodying the performance or display of a work which violates such Commission rules shall be subject to the remedies, sanctions, and penalties provided by subchapter V of this chapter and section 605 of this title.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VII, §712, as added Pub. L. 100–667, title II, §203, Nov. 16, 1988, 102 Stat. 3958; amended Pub. L. 103–414, title III, §304(a)(17), Oct. 25, 1994, 108 Stat. 4297.)

AMENDMENTS

1994—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 103–414 struck out ‘‘, within 120 days after January 1, 1989,’’ after ‘‘The Federal Communications Commission shall’’.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1989, see section 206 of Pub. L. 100–667, set out as a note under section 119 of Title 17, Copyrights.

§613. Video programming accessibility

(a) Commission inquiry

Within 180 days after February 8, 1996, the Federal Communications Commission shall complete an inquiry to ascertain the level at which video programming is closed captioned. Such inquiry shall examine the extent to which existing or previously published programming is closed captioned, the size of the video programming provider or programming owner providing closed captioning, the size of the market served, the relative audience shares achieved, or any other related factors. The Commission shall submit to the Congress a report on the results of such inquiry.

(b) Accountability criteria

Within 18 months after February 8, 1996, the Commission shall prescribe such regulations as are necessary to implement this section. Such regulations shall ensure that—

(1) video programming first published or exhibited after the effective date of such regulations is fully accessible through the provision of closed captions, except as provided in subsection (d) of this section; and

(2) video programming providers or owners maximize the accessibility of video programming first published or exhibited prior to the effective date of such regulations through the provision of closed captions, except as provided in subsection (d) of this section.

(c) Deadlines for captioning

Such regulations shall include an appropriate schedule of deadlines for the provision of closed captioning of video programming.

(d) Exemptions

Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section—

(1) the Commission may exempt by regulation programs, classes of programs, or services for which the Commission has determined that the provision of closed captioning would be economically burdensome to the provider or owner of such programming;

(2) a provider of video programming or the owner of any program carried by the provider shall not be obligated to supply closed captions if such action would be inconsistent with contracts in effect on February 8, 1996, except that nothing in this section shall be construed to relieve a video programming provider of its obligations to provide services required by Federal law; and

(3) a provider of video programming or program owner may petition the Commission for an exemption from the requirements of this section, and the Commission may grant such petition upon a showing that the requirements contained in this section would result in an undue burden.

(e) Undue burden

The term ‘‘undue burden’’ means significant difficulty or expense. In determining whether the closed captions necessary to comply with the requirements of this paragraph would result in an undue economic burden, the factors to be considered include—