

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, § 624A, as added Pub. L. 102-385, § 17, Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1491; amended Pub. L. 104-104, title III, § 301(f), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 116.)

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (a)(4). Pub. L. 104-104, § 301(f)(1), added par. (4).

Subsec. (c)(1)(A) to (C). Pub. L. 104-104, § 301(f)(2), added subpar. (A) and redesignated former subpars. (A) and (B) as (B) and (C), respectively.

Subsec. (c)(2)(D) to (F). Pub. L. 104-104, § 301(f)(3), added subpar. (D) and redesignated former subpars. (D) and (E) as (E) and (F), respectively.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective 60 days after Oct. 5, 1992, see section 28 of Pub. L. 102-385, set out as an Effective Date of 1992 Amendment note under section 325 of this title.

§ 545. Modification of franchise obligations

(a) Grounds for modification by franchising authority; public proceeding; time of decision

(1) During the period a franchise is in effect, the cable operator may obtain from the franchising authority modifications of the requirements in such franchise—

(A) in the case of any such requirement for facilities or equipment, including public, educational, or governmental access facilities or equipment, if the cable operator demonstrates that (i) it is commercially impracticable for the operator to comply with such requirement, and (ii) the proposal by the cable operator for modification of such requirement is appropriate because of commercial impracticability; or

(B) in the case of any such requirement for services, if the cable operator demonstrates that the mix, quality, and level of services required by the franchise at the time it was granted will be maintained after such modification.

(2) Any final decision by a franchising authority under this subsection shall be made in a public proceeding. Such decision shall be made within 120 days after receipt of such request by the franchising authority, unless such 120 day period is extended by mutual agreement of the cable operator and the franchising authority.

(b) Judicial proceedings; grounds for modification by court

(1) Any cable operator whose request for modification under subsection (a) of this section has been denied by a final decision of a franchising authority may obtain modification of such franchise requirements pursuant to the provisions of section 555 of this title.

(2) In the case of any proposed modification of a requirement for facilities or equipment, the court shall grant such modification only if the cable operator demonstrates to the court that—

(A) it is commercially impracticable for the operator to comply with such requirement; and

(B) the terms of the modification requested are appropriate because of commercial impracticability.

(3) In the case of any proposed modification of a requirement for services, the court shall grant

such modification only if the cable operator demonstrates to the court that the mix, quality, and level of services required by the franchise at the time it was granted will be maintained after such modification.

(c) Rearrangement, replacement, or removal of service

Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of this section, a cable operator may, upon 30 days' advance notice to the franchising authority, rearrange, replace, or remove a particular cable service required by the franchise if—

(1) such service is no longer available to the operator; or

(2) such service is available to the operator only upon the payment of a royalty required under section 801(b)(2) of title 17, which the cable operator can document—

(A) is substantially in excess of the amount of such payment required on the date of the operator's offer to provide such service, and

(B) has not been specifically compensated for through a rate increase or other adjustment.

(d) Rearrangement of particular services from one service tier to another or other offering of service

Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of this section, a cable operator may take such actions to rearrange a particular service from one service tier to another, or otherwise offer the service, if the rates for all of the service tiers involved in such actions are not subject to regulation under section 543 of this title.

(e) Requirements for services relating to public, educational, or governmental access

A cable operator may not obtain modification under this section of any requirement for services relating to public, educational, or governmental access.

(f) "Commercially impracticable" defined

For purposes of this section, the term "commercially impracticable" means, with respect to any requirement applicable to a cable operator, that it is commercially impracticable for the operator to comply with such requirement as a result of a change in conditions which is beyond the control of the operator and the nonoccurrence of which was a basic assumption on which the requirement was based.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, § 625, as added Pub. L. 98-549, § 2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2790.)

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.

§ 546. Renewal

(a) Commencement of proceedings; public notice and participation

(1) A franchising authority may, on its own initiative during the 6-month period which begins with the 36th month before the franchise expiration, commence a proceeding which affords the public in the franchise area appro-