

arising from the regulation of cable service or from a decision of approval or disapproval with respect to a grant, renewal, transfer, or amendment of a franchise, any relief, to the extent such relief is required by any other provision of Federal, State, or local law, shall be limited to injunctive relief and declaratory relief.

**(b) Exception for completed cases**

The limitation contained in subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to actions that, prior to such violation, have been determined by a final order of a court of binding jurisdiction, no longer subject to appeal, to be in violation of a cable operator's rights.

**(c) Discrimination claims permitted**

Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting the relief authorized with respect to any claim against a franchising authority or other governmental entity, or any official, member, employee, or agent of such authority or entity, to the extent such claim involves discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or handicap.

**(d) Rule of construction**

Nothing in this section shall be construed as creating or authorizing liability of any kind, under any law, for any action or failure to act relating to cable service or the granting of a franchise by any franchising authority or other governmental entity, or any official, member, employee, or agent of such authority or entity.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, §635A, as added Pub. L. 102-385, §24(a), Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1500.)

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.

**§ 556. Coordination of Federal, State, and local authority**

**(a) Regulation by States, political subdivisions, State and local agencies, and franchising authorities**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to affect any authority of any State, political subdivision, or agency thereof, or franchising authority, regarding matters of public health, safety, and welfare, to the extent consistent with the express provisions of this subchapter.

**(b) State jurisdiction with regard to cable services**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to restrict a State from exercising jurisdiction with regard to cable services consistent with this subchapter.

**(c) Preemption**

Except as provided in section 557 of this title, any provision of law of any State, political subdivision, or agency thereof, or franchising authority, or any provision of any franchise granted by such authority, which is inconsistent with this chapter shall be deemed to be preempted and superseded.

**(d) "State" defined**

For purposes of this section, the term "State" has the meaning given such term in section 153 of this title.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, §636, as added Pub. L. 98-549, §2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2800; amended Pub. L. 104-104, §3(d)(3), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 61.)

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 104-104 substituted "section 153" for "section 153(v)".

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.

**§ 557. Existing franchises**

(a) The provisions of—

(1) any franchise in effect on the effective date of this subchapter, including any such provisions which relate to the designation, use, or support for the use of channel capacity for public, educational, or governmental use, and

(2) any law of any State (as defined in section 153 of this title) in effect on October 30, 1984, or any regulation promulgated pursuant to such law, which relates to such designation, use or support of such channel capacity,

shall remain in effect, subject to the express provisions of this subchapter, and for not longer than the then current remaining term of the franchise as such franchise existed on such effective date.

(b) For purposes of subsection (a) of this section and other provisions of this subchapter, a franchise shall be considered in effect on the effective date of this subchapter if such franchise was granted on or before such effective date.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, §637, as added Pub. L. 98-549, §2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2800; amended Pub. L. 104-104, §3(d)(3), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 61.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

For "the effective date of this subchapter" and "such effective date", referred to in subsecs. (a) and (b), as 60 days after Oct. 30, 1984, except where otherwise expressly provided, see section 9(a) of Pub. L. 98-549, set out as an Effective Date note under section 521 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 104-104 substituted "section 153" for "section 153(v)".

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.

**§ 558. Criminal and civil liability**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be deemed to affect the criminal or civil liability of cable programmers or cable operators pursuant to the Federal, State, or local law of libel, slander, obscenity, incitement, invasions of privacy, false or misleading advertising, or other similar laws, except that cable operators shall not incur any such liability for any program carried on any channel designated for public, educational, gov-

ernmental use or on any other channel obtained under section 532 of this title or under similar arrangements unless the program involves obscene material.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, § 638, as added Pub. L. 98-549, § 2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2801; amended Pub. L. 102-385, § 10(d), Oct. 5, 1992, 106 Stat. 1486.)

#### AMENDMENTS

1992—Pub. L. 102-385 inserted before period at end “unless the program involves obscene material”.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT

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

#### 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.

### § 559. Obscene programming

Whoever transmits over any cable system any matter which is obscene or otherwise unprotected by the Constitution of the United States shall be fined under title 18 or imprisoned not more than 2 years, or both.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, § 639, as added Pub. L. 98-549, § 2, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 2801; amended Pub. L. 104-104, title V, § 503, Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 136.)

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Pub. L. 104-104 substituted “under title 18” for “not more than \$10,000”.

#### 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.

### § 560. Scrambling of cable channels for non-subscribers

#### (a) Subscriber request

Upon request by a cable service subscriber, a cable operator shall, without charge, fully scramble or otherwise fully block the audio and video programming of each channel carrying such programming so that one not a subscriber does not receive it.

#### (b) “Scramble” defined

As used in this section, the term “scramble” means to rearrange the content of the signal of the programming so that the programming cannot be viewed or heard in an understandable manner.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, § 640, as added Pub. L. 104-104, title V, § 504, Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 136.)

### § 561. Scrambling of sexually explicit adult video service programming

#### (a) Requirement

In providing sexually explicit adult programming or other programming that is indecent on

any channel of its service primarily dedicated to sexually-oriented programming, a multichannel video programming distributor shall fully scramble or otherwise fully block the video and audio portion of such channel so that one not a subscriber to such channel or programming does not receive it.

#### (b) Implementation

Until a multichannel video programming distributor complies with the requirement set forth in subsection (a) of this section, the distributor shall limit the access of children to the programming referred to in that subsection by not providing such programming during the hours of the day (as determined by the Commission) when a significant number of children are likely to view it.

#### (c) “Scramble” defined

As used in this section, the term “scramble” means to rearrange the content of the signal of the programming so that the programming cannot be viewed or heard in an understandable manner.

(June 19, 1934, ch. 652, title VI, § 641, as added Pub. L. 104-104, title V, § 505(a), Feb. 8, 1996, 110 Stat. 136.)

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section 505(b) of Pub. L. 104-104 provided that: “The amendment made by subsection (a) [enacting this section] shall take effect 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Feb. 8, 1996].”

#### PART V—VIDEO PROGRAMMING SERVICES PROVIDED BY TELEPHONE COMPANIES

### § 571. Regulatory treatment of video programming services

#### (a) Limitations on cable regulation

##### (1) Radio-based systems

To the extent that a common carrier (or any other person) is providing video programming to subscribers using radio communication, such carrier (or other person) shall be subject to the requirements of subchapter III of this chapter and section 572 of this title, but shall not otherwise be subject to the requirements of this subchapter.

##### (2) Common carriage of video traffic

To the extent that a common carrier is providing transmission of video programming on a common carrier basis, such carrier shall be subject to the requirements of subchapter II of this chapter and section 572 of this title, but shall not otherwise be subject to the requirements of this subchapter. This paragraph shall not affect the treatment under section 522(7)(C) of this title of a facility of a common carrier as a cable system.

##### (3) Cable systems and open video systems

To the extent that a common carrier is providing video programming to its subscribers in any manner other than that described in paragraphs (1) and (2)—

(A) such carrier shall be subject to the requirements of this subchapter, unless such programming is provided by means of an open video system for which the Commission