

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

In the Air: SCOTUS Opinions Shaking Up Healthcare, Federal Agencies

Companies across the media and cable landscape scrambled Friday to reply to questions regarding their healthcare policies in light of the **Supreme Court's** decision to reverse *Roe v. Wade*. We don't have answers on how all are addressing it, but some have revealed how they plan to support employees seeking abortion or family planning access that cannot access that care in their home states.

Warner Bros Discovery expanded healthcare options in response to the news, covering expenses for employees and family members that need to travel in order to access reproductive care. **Disney** is offering those unable to find medical care in one location affordable access to the same care in another location. The policy applies to family planning decisions. **Paramount Global** said in a note to staff Friday it intends to act similarly in situations where employees need to travel to receive services covered through the company's health insurance, including abortion. **Netflix** grants a lifetime allowance of \$10,000 per employee for travel reimbursements for employees as well as any dependents that need to travel in order to receive treatments like abortions or gender-affirming care. **Comcast NBCU's** existing healthcare offerings give employees up to \$4,000 per medical-related trip. They may take up to three trips each year with a \$10,000 annual cap on coverage.

Decisions from the Supreme Court are still rolling out this week, and one in particular could have a major impact on the regulatory

power of federal expert agencies. *West Virginia v. EPA* is a case in which Republican Attorneys Generals fought back against and challenged a proposed rule from the Biden Administration tied to carbon emissions. The petitioners argue that allowing the EPA to make such major decisions that would significantly impact the electrical grids would give it power far beyond what it has previously held.

Should the Court rule for the states, it would effectively be overturning the principle of Chevron Deference that sees courts defer to expert agencies when legislation on an issue isn't explicit. The result of transferring that power away from agencies like the **FCC** and **FTC** would presumably bring a lot of uncertainty to the larger federal regulatory environment.

"An enormous source of power for the FCC has been the 'public interest standard.' It is questionable now whether any decision based on that standard will be upheld by a court," **New Street Research** said in a note. "Further, an agency like the FCC becomes something like an administrative law judge that serves up a record for the real decision maker—the courts—to use or discard in any way that it views as it wishes. Moreover, the agencies will now, as a practical matter, work more for the judiciary than for the Congress that creates, funds, and confirms their top appointments, or for the President."

States could also be more empowered to take matters into their own hands. They would be more likely to implement rules on issues that previously seemed to live under the jurisdiction of federal agencies, raising the risk of a patchy regulatory framework across the country.

THE FAXIES

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN PR & MARKETING

Awards Celebration:
Wednesday, June 29 at 4pm ET

Cablefax is PROUD to announce 2022 finalists for **The FAXIES**, the ultimate awards program in the b2b media space. The FAXIES honor 2022's marketing & PR campaigns as well as the executives and teams who brought them to life. Join us when the winners will be announced.

View the Finalists and RSVP for Event at
www.thefaxies.com



“The short-term headline reaction will be that the decision is good for the stocks in regulated sectors, like telecom. Over time, however, investors will come to see the picture as more complicated, with the uncertainty about outcomes and the longer timeline for decisions creating a cloud about the sustainability of any rules, a cloud that could dampen the outlook for stocks,” the firm said.

STARKS ZEROES IN ON ACP, CLIMATE

In delivering the keynote at the 2022 Broadband for All Summit in Stockholm Monday, FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks praised the Affordable Connectivity Program but said there is still much to do there. Starks said one ACP target should be households receiving federal public housing assistance, which have “unusually low enrollment” despite being automatically eligible for the subsidy. He revealed he’s been working on a pilot to expand ACP participation in such households. Changes include making the application easier to complete; developing better inter-governmental coordination; using clearer language; and providing more opportunities for assistance during the sign-up process. Starks trumpeted the successful deployment of 5G networks and the massive amounts of private and public capital expanding telecom infrastructure. But he warned against mistaking achievements for ultimate success. “With broadband, no matter how much we manage to achieve along the way, we will not be truly successful unless every person has the same opportunity to participate in our connected future, and unless we build that future responsibly, sustainably, and with our climate in mind,” Starks said. Note that bit about sustainability, with the commish declaring that the Information and Communications Technology sector plays a disproportionately large role

in combating climate change. Those efforts include spectrum efficiency, leveraging connectivity for smart infrastructure (ie, use AI and data to with traffic flow, energy transmission, etc), reducing or eliminating carbon emissions and investing in networks that can stand up to extreme weather.

PIVOTAL UPDATES COMCAST FINANCIAL MODEL

Pivotal Research adjusted its financial outlook for Comcast as it forecasts a U.S. recession in the first half of 2023. Pivotal reduced Comcast’s year-end target price by \$2 to \$55, but didn’t make any changes to its cable RGU outlook as Pivotal expects it to remain buoyant. Expectations for NBC were reduced, however, due to “weakness in scatter advertising that we expect to worsen materially in 2H and in ’23.” After NBCUniversal garnered \$3.25 million in advertising revenue in 3Q21, Pivotal expects that number to drop 30% to \$2.28 million in 3Q22. “We remind investors that the vast majority of Comcast revenue is derived from providing important utility like services and they remain well positioned to ride out what we believe is an increasingly likely 1H’23 recession,” Pivotal Research noted. Sky financial expectations declined due to expected pound weakness relative to USD, as total revenue is expected to fall from \$20.28 million to \$19.09 million.

FCC OKAYS CMG, ALTA FIBER COMPLAINT DISMISSAL

The FCC dismissed the retransmission consent disputes filed by Cox Media Group and altafiber against each other on Friday after hearing from both parties that they had agreed to new terms. Altafiber was the first to submit a complaint in April, claiming that Cox Media Group failed to negotiate in good faith, and Cox Media Group quickly fought back with its own counterclaim. The dispute

Corporate Licenses
Cablefax Daily
WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST.
 Get reduced subscription rates for multiple readers in your organization.
 Find out more! Contact Client Services at ClientServices@accessintel.com
www.cablefax.com

The advertisement includes a smaller image of the Cablefax Daily magazine cover, dated Monday, November 2, 2020. The cover features the headline 'Deal Talk: RCN/Altivo/Grande CEO Discusses \$6.1bn Stargate Deal' and other industry news. It also includes a 'Most Powerful Women' award announcement for December 4th.

Cablefax Daily (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC | www.cablefax.com | 301.354.2101 | Editorial Director: Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760, amaclean@accessintel.com | VP/Group Publisher, Cablefax and Synopsis: Robbie Caploe, 917.974.0640, rcaploe@accessintel.com | Managing Editor: Sara Winegardner, 301.354.1701, swinegardner@accessintel.com | Associate Editor: Noah Ziegler, 301.354.1704, nziegler@accessintel.com | Director of Business Development, Cablefax: Ellen Kamhi, 917.626.5574, ekamhi@accessintel.com | Dir of Marketing: Kate Schaeffer, kschaeffer@accessintel.com | Production Manager: Joann Fato, jfatto@accessintel.com | Kerry Smith, Divisional President, Marketing & Media Group, ksmith@accessintel.com | Group Subs/Subscription Questions, Client Services: 301.354.2101, clientservices@accessintel.com | Annual subscription price: \$1,799.00/year | Access Intelligence, LLC, 9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850

centered around **WHIO**, the CBS affiliate in Dayton, Ohio, but the pair were able to resolve their disputes earlier this month.

NTIA AWARDS \$10 MILLION TO MICHIGAN

NTIA awarded Michigan State University more than \$10 million from the Broadband Infrastructure Program to fund middle mile fiber infrastructure expansion across the state. The project, which is occurring in partnership with last mile ISPs, will enable a total of 103 access points with nearly 70,000 census blocks and more than 120,000 unserved locations. Upon completion, the project will provide 16,499 unserved households with high-speed internet. This is the final award from the Broadband Infrastructure Program, which granted a total of 14 awards with more than \$288 million in funding.

FCC, IMLS JOIN ON FUNDING AWARENESS

FCC chairwoman *Jessica Rosenworcel* and Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services *Crosby Kemper* announced an MOU to jointly promote public awareness of federal funding opportunities for broadband. The goal is to generate efforts to promote access of affordable broadband programs, focusing on communities where broadband availability is difficult. The partnership will also share data about participation in the FCC's E-Rate and Emergency Connectivity Fund programs, publicize information about federal broadband funding opportunities and help with the development of broadband outreach.

NAB STATEMENT ON CANNABIS ADS

The **House Appropriations Committee** advanced the FY23 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill Friday, potentially easing restrictions on radio and TV broadcasters that accept cannabis ads. The bill includes language that prevents the **FCC** from acting against broadcasters that accept such ads, so long as cannabis is legal in the state the station is licensed in. **NAB** spokesman *Alex Siciliano* said in a statement the organization supports this move. "As the vast majority of states have legalized cannabis in some form, today marks a long overdue step toward finally allowing broadcasters to receive equal treatment regarding cannabis advertising that other forms of media have had for years."

USFL SET FOR ANOTHER SEASON

With its inaugural season championship coming Sunday, the **USFL** will return for a second season. **Fox Sports** CEO and Executive Producer *Eric Shanks* [confirmed](#) the news to *Sports Business Journal*, adding that the league will play in two to four markets next year instead of having all games in Birmingham, Alabama. Eventually, the USFL wants teams to play in their respective markets, with discussions between the league and cities underway. This sets up a battle between spring football leagues with the **XFL** re-launch happening in spring 2023.

CHARTER TO APPEAL \$375M STABBING VERDICT

A Texas jury ordered **Charter** to pay \$375 million in compensatory damages to the family of 83-year-old *Betty Thomas*, who was fatally stabbed in 2019 by a company field technician. The jury found the operator acted negligently in hiring *Roy James Holder*, 45. That amount could increase when the jury considers punitive damages, with the next phase of the trial set to

resume July 6. Holder pleaded guilty to murder and received a life sentence in April 2021. He went to Thomas' home to help with her phone line and returned the next day, when he was off the clock, and stabbed her to death. Charter plans to appeal the verdict. "Our hearts go out to Mrs. Thomas' family in the wake of this senseless and tragic crime. The responsibility for this horrible act rests solely with Mr. Holden, and we are grateful he is in prison for life. While we respect the jury and the justice system, we strongly disagree with the verdict and plan to appeal," the company said in a statement. "The law in Texas and the facts presented at trial clearly show this crime was not foreseeable: At Charter, we are committed to the safety of all our customers and took the necessary steps, including a thorough pre-employment criminal background check—which showed no arrests, convictions or other criminal behavior. Nor did anything in Mr. Holden's performance after he was hired suggest he was capable of the crime he committed, including more than 1,000 completed service calls with zero customer complaints about his behavior."

CARRIAGE

Fuse Media's FAST channels **Fuse Backstage** and **Fuse Beat** are now available on **Amazon Freevee**, formerly **IMDb TV**. Fuse Beat highlights Black culture and content while Fuse Backstage boasts a collection of music bios, performances, interviews and more.

DRAKE UNIVERSITY HONORS COMMISSO

Mediacom Communications CEO *Rocco Commisso* was given an honorary Doctor of Business Administration degree by Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. Mediacom made 1-Gig internet available to over 300 Iowa communities in 2017 as part of the company's \$1 billion capital investment plan.

FIBER FRENZY

Clearwave Fiber is slated to start building its network in Lansing, Kansas, this month, marking the company's entrance into the Sunflower State. Clearwave is seeking to bring its service to over 500,000 residents and businesses in the U.S. by 2027.

RATINGS

The 2022 NBA Draft averaged 3.05 million viewers over both rounds—up 33% from 2021, according to **Nielsen**. The first round was broadcast on **ABC** and **ESPN** and averaged 3.99 million viewers, up 32% from last year. The second round was only on ESPN. The broadcast peaked at 4.5 million viewers at 8:15pm. – **Stadium's** live Twitter broadcast "Inside The Association: Draft Special Presented by AT&T and Safelite," garnered 4.45 million views, a 270% YOY increase. It's also the most amount of views Stadium has achieved on **Twitter**.

PEOPLE

Frontier appointed its VP, Controller *William McGloin* as Chief Accounting Officer and Controller, effective Friday. The newly combined position follows the exit of SVP and Chief Accounting Officer *Donald Daniels*. – *Helen Swenson* joined **AccuWeather** as Chief Content Officer. Swenson—who joins from NY1 **Spectrum News**—will manage strategy for content initiatives across AccuWeather's platforms and digital content on its website.