

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 27, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roger F. Wicker  
Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Graham and Wicker, and Ranking Members Feinstein and Cantwell,

It has come to our attention that AT&T/ DIRECTV subscribers in Northern Maine's Presque Isle media market do not have access to their local broadcast channels from within Maine. Although there is no technological limitation, AT&T/ DIRECTV is providing these subscribers with broadcast channels from outside the state rather than those from more local broadcast stations in Presque Isle or even the Bangor or Portland-Auburn markets. This is unacceptable and denies these viewers access to critically important in-state news, weather, and emergency information.

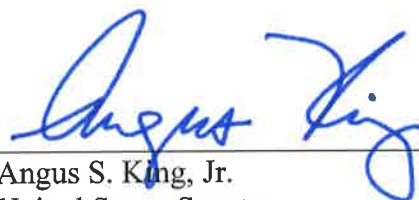
AT&T/ DIRECTV is permitted to import such "distant signals" pursuant to the STELA Reauthorization Act of 2014 (P.L. 200-113, "STELAR"), which will sunset at the end of 2019. When the distant signal license was first temporarily passed into law thirty years ago, it was conceived to allow fledgling satellite companies the ability to compete with the large cable companies, and to overcome technological roadblocks which made it impossible for some subscribers to receive local network programming. None of those roadblocks exist today, and the satellite industry is a mature, established part of the media landscape.

As your Committees deliberate whether STELAR's distant signal statutory license provisions should sunset as originally intended, we are concerned that this license has not only outlived its usefulness, but now provides a below-market incentive for AT&T/ DIRECTV to deny viewers in Northern Maine the in-state coverage they desire and deserve. We ask that you weigh this harm to our constituents – along with those viewers in any other neglected markets across the country – and work with us to remedy this problem.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator