



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*The following statement may be attributed to Joseph S. Miller, Founder and President of WashingTECH*

**Statement regarding the Federal Communications Commission's  
revision of the Children's TV Programming Rules**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Wednesday, July 10th, 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) revised the Children's TV Programming Rules. The rules define children as persons aged 16 and under.

The Republican-controlled majority kept some of the existing rules. For example, the FCC will still require broadcast television stations to air at least 3 hours per week of children's educational and informative (E/I) content. However, the revised rules now allow broadcasters to begin broadcasting children's programming at 6AM — 1 hour earlier than the FCC previously allowed. They also let broadcasters segregate some required children's programming (13 hours per quarter) to a "multicast stream" apart from the main station stream.

The FCC states that these rule changes serve the public interest because they "give broadcasters greater scheduling flexibility, enable them to offer more diverse and innovative educational programming, and relieve unnecessary burdens while ensuring that educational programming remains available to all children."

In reality, however, these changes worsen the negative health effects of earlier school start times<sup>1</sup> by allowing advertisers to target children even earlier. They also enable broadcasters to move multicultural children's programming, such as 'Sesame Street', to programming streams that won't reach most viewers. This effectively chills the First Amendment speech rights of multicultural content creators.

For these reasons, WashingTECH strongly objects to these rule changes. It also urges the FCC to reconsider them. Further, WashingTECH urges Congress to conduct hearings to investigate the true motives behind these rule changes. Finally, WashingTECH encourages diverse children's content creators to flag, in Federal District Court, instances of unlawful discrimination against their work by television stations.

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<sup>1</sup> See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Most U.S. middle and high schools start the day too early* (Aug. 6, 2015) available at <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2015/p0806-school-sleep.html>.