STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS

Re: *Accessibility of User Interfaces, and Video Programming Guides and Menus*, Third Report and
        Order, MB Docket No. 12-108

Details matter. The Commission's closed captioning requirements are robust. We require closed
captioning on nearly all television programming, as well as on a large portion of programming available
on streaming. For decades, we have imposed functional requirements on top of this general captioning
obligation: devices must permit users to change the presentation, color, opacity, size, and font of captions,
caption background color and opacity, character edge attributes, and caption window color. But these
rules do not mandate how users *access* such features on devices. And it turns out, that detail is crucial.

Deaf and hard of hearing individuals and advocacy groups have told us how it's difficult to find
the closed captioning display features on a device. And frankly, anyone who has ever watched video
programming knows the experience of pressing multiple buttons on a remote, or going through multiple
settings on a smartphone or tablet, in order to get to the menu you actually want.

I'm pleased that today we adopt the details necessary to make our closed captioning display rules
fully effective. Device manufacturers and MVPDs must ensure that closed captioning display settings are
readily accessible. And this applies to a wide range of devices – not just televisions and set top boxes, but
any device manufactured or used in the United States that is designed to receive or play back video
programming transmitted simultaneously with sound. This will aid – and potentially increase – the
substantial audience served by closed captioning.

I am also pleased that the rules we adopt today stem from a joint proposal by NCTA, the National
Association for the Deaf, TDIforAccess, Communications Service for the Deaf, and Hearing Loss
Association of America. When we work together, we go far.

Thank you to the Commission staff who worked on this item. It has my strong support.