



Section 255, New Communications Technologies Accessibility Legislation

On May 1, 2008, the United States Congress heard testimony on draft legislation, the "Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act." The legislation was requested by a coalition of organizations from the disability community to ensure that new information and communications technologies are accessible. The hearing took place before the Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet.

La Crescenta., CA, May 07, 2008 --(PR.com)-- Some of the Major manufactures should now look into the patents that encompass a magnifier of Any sorts being added to or built into phones, cell phones, PDA's Palms and GPS systems and all other small hand held Electronic devices. These patents are all held by a company called Magnifics Inc. The Product that is provided is The Phone Monocle, The number 1 selling cell phone magnifier and home phone magnifier.

The legislation that is now under consideration would put in place new requirements in several areas. First, it would build on the existing law known as Section 255, which requires telephones to be designed so that they are accessible to people with disabilities. Magnifics Inc. patented and designed Magnifiers (The Phone Monocle) to be added as an accessory or built into all home Phones, Cell Phones, Ipods, PDAs and GPS along with Insulin Pumps to aid in the vision department. The inventor and CEO of Magnifics Inc. Joanie Taylor invented The Phone Monocle to help her patients use the up and coming technology that has become a staple in today's social arena. The major phone companies like Motorola, Sprint/Nextel, Verizon/ GE/Sanyo have all stated that they are after the kids market and that is why the phones get smaller and smaller. The Phone Monocle addresses the accessibility act straight up and will be looked at a little closer now that Section 255, New Communications Technologies Accessibility Legislation is being updated.

In 1996 that law passed, and this new legislation would address communications Technologies that use the Internet to send and receive information. The legislation would also require video description of TV programs, starting with a modest requirement, but clearly directing that video description be increased over time. Video description means the insertion of audio descriptions of a television program's key visual elements during natural pauses in the program's dialogue. Some may remember that a previous law had required minimal video description, but that law was struck down in the courts. For those of us frustrated by the ever-increasing inaccessibility of our TV sets, the draft legislation requires that controls like on-screen menus and electronic program guides be made to be usable by those of us who can't see the screen. And, for individuals who are deaf-blind, the legislation would enable funds now used to help pay for phone service for low-income or hard-to-serve individuals to be used to help pay for braille displays and other technology needed to use text telecommunications devices and call relay systems. Finally, the legislation also includes several improvements for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

During the hearing a wonderful exchange about the accessibility of new technologies like the Blackberry took place.

Sergeant Major Jesse Acosta, one of our nation's military heroes who lost his sight during combat in Iraq,



described in blunt terms his frustration with communications technologies that he cannot use. In response, a Congressman demonstrated how to use the BlackBerry's voice call feature, but Mr. Acosta pointed out that without being able to see the screen, he couldn't set up the feature. And, in a priceless exchange, Congressman Edward Markey, a Democrat from Massachusetts who chairs the Subcommittee, also pointed out that a blind person would need assistance from someone who could see to enter names and numbers in the contact list. Chairman Markey has been a long-time friend of the disability community, and as the force behind this new legislation, he clearly "gets it." By simply adding any kind or style of The Phone Monocle, All phones, cell phones and PDA's along with insulin pumps and all other small hand held Electronics would become magnified up to 2-4 times, make it 2-4 xx's larger and easier to see.

For more information on AFB's web site at www.afb.org/blog/.

You can get more information about the draft legislation by going to the web site of the disability coalition that is supporting it--The Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT) at www.coataccess.org.

Magnifics Inc. Inventors and patent owners of the #1 cell phone magnifiers @ www.thephonemonocle.com or 818-248-2228 email magnificsinc@aol.com

You can also keep up with developments by signing up for "DirectConnect," a periodic advocacy information email from AFB's Public Policy Center in Washington, DC. Send an e-mail to Barbara LeMoine at blemoine@afb.net to add your name to the list.

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