

Cablefax Daily™

Wednesday — March 18, 2015

What the Industry Reads First

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Net Neutrality Needling: Wheeler Quizzed on White House Emails, Meetings

After grilling FCC chmn *Tom Wheeler* over whether the White House influenced the FCC's Title II net neutrality order, House Oversight chmn *Jason Chaffetz* (R-UT) announced at Tues' hearing's close that the FCC's Inspector General has launched an investigation into the process. "It's my understanding that it's not an audit, but an actual investigation," he said, as the nearly 3-hour meeting wrapped. That was news to Wheeler, who said he would "of course" cooperate. During the course of the hearing, Wheeler repeated several times that "there were no secret instructions from the White House." He said *President Obama's* comments in support of Title II "of course" had an impact on the net neutrality debate, but all options were on the table. He said he didn't feel obligated to follow the president's recommendations but did feel obligated to listen to him, as well as the 4mln comments at the Commission. Republicans weren't satisfied, pumping him on email exchanges, meeting with White House staffers and his timeline for favoring to Title II regulation. Democrats stood up for him, with Rep *Carolyn Maloney* (D-NY) suggesting Congress should be thanking Wheeler for acting in the public's interest. At times, the hearing had a "Watergate feel" to it, Rep *Peter Welch* (D-VT) commented. Chaffetz honed in on Wheeler's meetings with White House staffers, saying he found it hard to believe only one of 10 meetings triggered the need to file an ex parte in the net neutrality proceeding. Wheeler, who was cut off several times in his response, said he met with White House officials on several topics, including trade, the AWS auction and E-Rate, adding that ex partes were filed when appropriate. Rep *Jim Jordan* (R-OH) was interested in how only 1 out of 10 meetings with the White House happened at the FCC. That meeting was Nov 6 with asst to the pres for economic policy *Jeffrey Zients*. "My contention is... Jeff Zients came to you and said, 'hey, things have changed. We want the Title II approach to this rule,'" Jordan said. Wheeler rejected that, saying that a *WSJ* report that came out shortly before that meeting saying he favored a Sect 706 approach was wrong. Jordan said he wasn't the only one "who thinks, pointing to a Nov 10 email exchange between a Wheeler staffer and **AT&T** lobbyist in which the telco rep wrote that "This is awful... And bad for any semblance of agency independence. Too many people saw Zients going in to meet with Tom last week." (An email from *David Krone*, former **NCTA** and **Comcast** lobbyist turned Sen *Harry Reid* staffer, also got some play. Krone's email said he spoke to White House officials and told them to "back off Title II.") Ranking member *Elijah Cummings* (D-MD) had his own emails, with one showing that GOP commish

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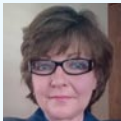
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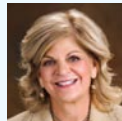
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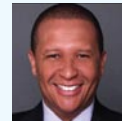
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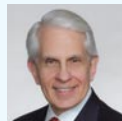
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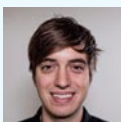
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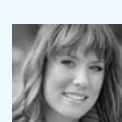
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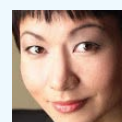
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Mike O'Rielly had sought edits from former FCC commissioners *Robert McDowell* and *Harold Furchtgott-Roth* as well as **TechFreedom** pres *Bernin Szoka*—all advocates against Title II—to a May 10 op/ed he wrote for *The Hill*. Cummings said he's not implying wrongdoing, but if the hearing is going to examine the White House's relationship with the FCC, it should also look at the GOP commissioners' actions. O'Rielly said there was no need for an ex parte because they were commenting on his personal views, not lobbying or expressing views to the Commission. An issue brought up repeatedly by Republican members was why the FCC didn't release a draft of the order for public comment. Wheeler said not only was it not precedent, but it could cause problems as edits were made. He asked whether the FCC would need to re-release the draft each time, suggesting that it could have a ripple effect on capital markets. Bottom line: Wheeler doesn't regret the decision not to release the draft nor does he regret the process that resulted in the order. "I'm proud of the process that the Commission ran to develop the open Internet order," he said. It was one of most open and transparent in Commission history."

FCC Reauthorization: Ahead of Thurs' hearing, **House Communications** subcmte chmn *Greg Walden* released a draft bill to reauthorize the **FCC**. The legislation would reauthorize the agency for the 1st time in 25 years, with Walden painting it as reforms for an FCC that is "ill equipped for the innovation era." The draft would fix FCC appropriations at the current level for the next 4 fiscal years, cap USF at \$9bln per year, with that to be offset by contributions, authorize the FCC to make changes to its schedule of fees and create an independent Inspector General at the FCC who couldn't be hired or fired by the chmn. All 5 commissioners will be at the hearing Thurs, with Walden expecting a "spirited" discussion.

Sling TV Update: Add **A&E**, **History**, **H2** and **Lifetime** to **DISH's** 6-week-old streaming video offering **Sling TV's** channel lineup. The additions to Sling TV's "Best of Live TV" core package brings the streaming service's standard tier to 20 channels while keeping the price at \$20 a month. Under a deal with **A+E Nets**, Sling TV subs also get 2 new add-on packs, "Lifestyle Extra" and "World News Extra," each priced at an additional \$5 per month. The "Lifestyle Extra" programming offering includes **truTV**, **Cooking Channel**, **DIY** and **WE tv**, with **FYI** and **LMN** coming soon, while the "World News Extra" features **Bloomberg TV**, **HLN**, **Euro News**, **France 24**, **NDTV 24/7**, **News 18** and **Russia Today**. Together, the 2 add-on packs replace Sling TV's originally offered "News & Info Extra" that previously included Cooking Channel, DIY, Bloomberg TV and HLN. In addition, DISH discontinued Sling TV's "News & Info Extra" program. Existing "News & Info Extra" subscribers will receive both the "Lifestyle Extra" and "World News Extra" for a total of \$5 per month. The "Best of Live TV" core package now offers **ESPN**, **ESPN2**, **AMC**, **TNT**, **TBS**, **Food Network**, **HGTV**, **Travel Channel**, **IFC**, **El Rey**, **Adult Swim**, **Cartoon Network**, **ABC Family**, **Disney Channel**, **CNN** and **Galavision**, with optional "Sports Extra," "Hollywood Extra," "Kids Extra," and now the "Lifestyle Extra" and "World News Extra" add-on packs, each priced at \$5 per month. DISH plans to double the size of the core package while keeping the cost at \$20 a month, Sling TV CEO *Roger Lynch* said in a statement. Meanwhile, **Microsoft's** Xbox One became the 1st gaming console to support Sling TV with the release of a Sling TV app. The Xbox One platform means Sling TV subs can use Kinect voice or gesture controls and run multiple activities simultaneously by using Xbox One's Snap feature. The companies are also running promotions for the service, offering 1 month of free Sling TV to current Xbox Live members who have an Xbox One. In addition, the first 5K customers who purchase an Xbox One between now and Sunday will receive 3 free months of Sling TV. Sling TV is already on other platforms including **Amazon** Fire TV and Fire TV Stick; **Roku** players and Roku TV models; Android and iOS devices; Macs and PCs.

Atlanta Braves Sign up for Comcast: **Comcast** continues to score deals with professional sports teams. Under a multi-year technology and real estate agreement with the **Atlanta Braves**, Comcast will offer multi-terabit service to SunTrust Park and the surrounding community. Throughout the 60-acre project that includes the new ballpark, retail shops, restaurants and entertainment and office space, the MSO will provide video, voice and fiber-based HSI connectivity. The op will also become the Braves' tenant in a multi-story office building within the development, which will house more than 1K Comcast employees. The majority of the positions will be new, added after construction is complete in 2017. The space will include an innovation lab, which will become the primary technology development hub for Comcast, connecting via HSI to the company's other R&D facilities in Silicon Valley, Philly and Denver.

DirecTV Adds TVE Nets: **DirecTV** added 22 channels to its TVE lineup of live, out-of-home streaming offerings. Upon authentication, subs can access additional nets including **BET**, **MTV**, **MTV2**, **Nickelodeon**, **TV Land**, **truTV**, **Cartoon Network**, **Comedy Central**, **Spike**, **VH1**, **Palladia**, **CMT**, **HLN** and **CNN**; **OWN**, **TBS**, **Turner Classic Movies**, **TNT**; **Univision's** **UniMas**, **Galavision** and **Univision**, and the **Smithsonian Channel**.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Pac-12 Inks Latin America Deal:

Pac-12 Networks continues its global expansion. Under a multi-year agreement with **Metta Sport**, an international sports marketing and distribution agency, Pac-12 Nets' live, near-live and VOD programming across nearly 30 sports will be offered throughout the region, including Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Metta Sport already has rights to distribute some Pac-12 Nets events starting in March through the Claro Sports network in several Latin American countries. The move followed Pac-12's agreement in Jan with Chinese interactive video platform **LeTV** to stream 27 men's basketball games in China for the 2014-2015 season.

One World Goes Mobile: Say Hi to Watch One World Sports, a free app from **One World Sports** allowing access to live streaming and on demand games upon authentication. For non-subs, the app offers video highlights and on-demand content across sports.

On the Circuit: The **SCTE-Tuck** Executive Leadership Program will feature presenters including **Cable-Labs** pres/CEO *Phil McKinney* and **Liberty Global** svp/CTO *Balan Nair*. The program will be conducted April 26 through May 1 on the **Dartmouth College** campus in NH.

People: The **Weather Company** upped *Lauren Frasca* to vp of original programming for **The Weather Channel**. She'll still report to *Michael Rubin*, svp of original programming.

Cablefax Daily Stockwatch

Company	03/17 Close	1-Day Ch	Company	03/17 Close	1-Day Ch
BROADCASTERS/DBS/MMDS					
DIRECTV:	85.22	(0.38)	COMMScope:	26.38	0.10
DISH:	73.36	(0.18)	CONCURRENT:	6.73	(0.06)
ENTRAVISION:	6.71	(0.04)	CONVERGYS:	22.70	0.34
GRAY TELEVISION:	14.40	0.02	CSG SYSTEMS:	29.47	(0.07)
MEDIA GENERAL:	16.56	(0.19)	ECHOSTAR:	50.99	(0.5)
NEXSTAR:	57.90	(0.08)	GOOGLE:	550.84	(3.67)
SINCLAIR:	28.49	(0.01)	HARMONIC:	7.59	0.01
MSOS			INTEL:	30.59	(0.24)
CABLEVISION:	17.89	(0.32)	INTERACTIVE CORP:	68.76	1.20
CHARTER:	188.62	(2.76)	JDSU:	13.90	(0.03)
COMCAST:	59.13	(0.62)	LEVEL 3:	54.42	(0.13)
COMCAST SPCL:	58.76	(0.56)	MICROSOFT:	41.70	0.14
GCI:	14.51	0.06	NETFLIX:	418.52	(3.45)
GRAHAM HOLDING:	1081.76	(10.28)	NIELSEN:	43.10	(0.12)
LIBERTY BROADBAND:	54.67	(0.69)	RENTRAK:	56.77	1.09
LIBERTY GLOBAL:	52.52	(0.15)	SEACHANGE:	7.76	0.05
SHAW COMM:	22.61	(0.06)	SONY:	26.75	0.93
SHENTEL:	30.88	0.06	SPRINT NEXTEL:	5.09	(0.06)
SHENTEL:	30.88	0.06	TIVO:	10.52	(0.13)
TIME WARNER CABLE:	156.45	(1.93)	UNIVERSAL ELEC:	55.66	(0.13)
PROGRAMMING			VONAGE:	4.51	(0.02)
21ST CENTURY FOX:	33.87	(0.48)	YAHOO:	43.78	0.28
AMC NETWORKS:	72.78	0.58	TELCOS		
CBS:	61.77	(0.31)	AT&T:	32.90	(0.16)
CROWN:	3.94	0.10	CENTURYLINK:	35.13	0.63
DISCOVERY:	32.11	(0.49)	TDS:	25.95	0.16
DISNEY:	106.96	(0.41)	VERIZON:	48.95	(0.32)
GRUPO TELEvisa:	34.23	(0.13)	MARKET INDICES		
HSN:	68.07	0.72	DOW:	17849.08	(128.34)
LIONSGATE:	34.04	0.06	NASDAQ:	4937.43	7.93
MSG:	78.51	0.70	S&P 500:	2074.28	(6.91)
SCRIPPS INT:	71.74	(0.95)			
STARZ:	33.55	(0.31)			
TIME WARNER:	85.76	0.31			
VIACOM:	69.12	(0.37)			
WWE:	16.07	(0.46)			
TECHNOLOGY					
ADDVANTAGE:	2.32	(0.02)			
AMDOCS:	52.67	0.56			
AMPHENOL:	59.00	(0.31)			
AOL:	40.42	1.57			
APPLE:	127.04	2.09			
ARRIS GROUP:	30.57	(0.05)			
AVID TECH:	12.66	(1.57)			
BLNDER TONGUE:	1.69	0.04			
BROADCOM:	44.47	(0.47)			
CISCO:	28.15	(0.15)			

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