

## DID YOU KNOW?

Netflix took three of the top-five spots in Nielsen's 35-day multiplatform viewing ranker for 2025-26. "Stranger Things" came first among broadcasters and streaming services, followed by "His & Hers" in second and "Sean Combs: The Reckoning" in fourth. CBS/Paramount+'s "Marshals" and "Landman" were third and fifth, respectively.

## PUBLIC INTEREST, ABC IN FCC CROSSFIRE

FCC Commissioner *Anna Gomez* [offered some foreshadowing](#) last week that a notice on the public interest standard was coming. It just so happened to come to fruition Thursday, the same day **Disney's** eight **ABC**-owned-and-operated stations were due to file their mandated early license renewals, putting the spotlight on the public interest standard yet again while simultaneously setting the stage for network pushback.

Disney's stations—KFSN (Fresno), KABC (L.A.), KGO (San Francisco), WLS (Chicago), WABC (New York), WTVD (Durham), WPVI (Philadelphia) and KTRK (Houston)—[were ordered](#) by the agency's Media Bureau to submit renewals in late April. It was a rare move that came amid President *Trump's* latest push for Disney and ABC to fire late-night host *Jimmy Kimmel*. However, FCC Chairman *Brendan Carr* has maintained that the order only [relates](#) to the Commission's investigation into Disney's DEI practices. Specifically, the order cites possible infractions with the 1934 Communications Act and the FCC's rules prohibiting unlawful discrimination.

While the ABC-owned stations turned in answers by the due date, they did so "under protest," labeling the order "unlawful, arbitrary and unconstitutional." The license applications noted that the FCC hasn't issued an early renewal order in more than five decades, and it's never required multiple renewal applications from a group of stations owned by the same network.

CYNOPSIS  
**SPORTS**  
AWARDS

Honoring the  
Best in Sports  
Media & Marketing

June 4 | 4 - 7 PM | Current, NYC

REGISTER NOW

Disney-owned ABC may be in the hot seat now, but others could have questions to answer. Thursday's FCC [public interest notice](#) warns that the agency will continue to engage in a "robust review" of applications to determine whether broadcasters have met their obligations to operate in the public interest and are following rules. The FCC added that consideration of broadcasters' public interest obligations isn't limited to license renewal applications, but also other applications, including assignments and transfers.

Gomez spoke out against the public interest notice, promising to engage in a robust review of applications to ensure compliance with rules. She also said she was "glad to see" Disney and ABC criticize the FCC's early license renewal order. Disney and ABC said there was no legitimate purpose for the early renewal.

"There is no information that the application will reveal that the Commission could not obtain through other means. The order is inconsistent with a legitimate exercise of investigative authority and is plainly incompatible with the First Amendment. Worse, the order opens the door to an assault on the station's license, while the Commission searches for a legal pretext to achieve its desired goal," the application for New York's WABC read. "This effort to suppress speech under the guise of bureaucratic process must not prevail. WABC files this application without waiving any rights, and calls on the Commission to rescind the Order."

The ABC stations aren't buying Carr's assertion that this has to do with a potential unlawful discrimination probe, arguing that it should have been laid out in the original investigation launched into Disney back in June 2025. ABC said it has produced more than 11,000 pages of documents to the FCC's Enforcement Bureau, though the Commission hasn't stated the specific violations it's accusing Disney of.

"There is no procedural path for this proceeding to terminate favorably for the Station, which demonstrates the unlawful Order's punitive intent and the harms flowing directly from it," WABC wrote. "The ultimate injury here is not to the Station or its parent company. It is to the public."

Both the early renewal and public interest notice raise several free speech questions. The notice declares that certain FCC regulatory efforts actually enhance rather than abridge freedoms of speech and press. "Further, the courts have recognized that there are limits on broadcasters' First Amendment rights. The mere denial of a license 'because 'the public interest' requires it 'is not a denial of free speech,'" the FCC said.

Gomez doesn't see it that way: "Broadcasters should ignore these latest threats and stiffen their spine. Pushing back is the only thing that will stop this FCC from abusing its power to silence speech and punish independent reporting." - *Noah Ziegler*

## HACKERS TARGET CHARTER DATA

**Charter** confirmed that it sustained a data breach, with early indicators pointing to the incident impacting a substantial portion of its 31.68 million customers. "We are aware of the situation, following our security protocols and are working with appropriate authorities. No sensitive personal information (PI) or customer proprietary network information (CPNI) data was exfiltrated by the threat actor as a

**CFX Daily** (ISSN 1069-6644) is published daily by Access Intelligence, LLC.  
**cablefax.com**

### EDITORIAL

#### Editor

Noah Ziegler, 301.354.1704,  
nziegler@accessintel.com

#### Senior Editor

John Saavedra, 908.477.1758  
jsaavedra@accessintel.com

#### Editorial Director

Amy Maclean, 301.354.1760,  
amaclean@accessintel.com

#### Editorial Director, Ad Tech & Convergent Media

Sarah Sluis, 212.621.4706,  
ssluis@accessintel.com

#### SVP Media Group

Dave Colford, 631.786.9796,  
dcolford@accessintel.com

### ADVERTISING/BUSINESS

#### Divisional President, Chief Marketer Network

Kerry Smith,  
ksmith@accessintel.com

#### Advertising and Sponsorship

Vernesa Merdanovic,  
vmerdanovic@accessintel.com

### MARKETING

#### Senior Marketing Director

Jessica Dombrowski,  
jdombrowski@accessintel.com

### PRODUCTION/CLIENT SERVICES

#### Sr Production Manager: Joann

Fato, jfato@accessintel.com

#### Group Subs: Vernesa Merdanovic,

vmerdanovic@accessintel.com

#### Subscription Questions:

Client Services: 301.354.2101,  
clientservices@accessintel.com |  
Annual subscription price:  
\$1,999.00/yr

#### Access Intelligence, LLC,

9211 Corporate Blvd., 4th Floor,  
Rockville, MD 20850

result of recent activity,” the operator told **CFX** in a statement. The hacking group ShinyHunters posted customer data to its blog on the dark web, alleging that it “failed to reach an agreement” with Charter regarding ransom demands and claiming to release 42 million records stolen from the cable giant. However, the research team at *Cybernews* [thinks](#) the dataset involves at least 13 million individuals, most either Spectrum Enterprise or Charter employees. Among the data exposed in the breach are full names, email addresses, company addresses and home addresses, as well as nearly 10 million records from customer support tickets that include customer email addresses and phone numbers. Cybernews said it found records tied to nearly 27,000 members of Charter’s workforce, including names, work emails, job titles and a limited number of home addresses. ShinyHunters also claimed responsibility for a ransomware attack of global education platform Canvas in April and May.

## CNN SUES AI COMPANY FOR STEALING CONTENT

Media companies have been trying to defend themselves from AI platforms that use copyrighted or trademarked content without proper permission. **CNN** launched its own defense Thursday morning, filing a lawsuit against the generative AI search engine **Perplexity** and accusing it of unlawfully copying and distributing CNN’s copyrighted content. The network claims Perplexity violates CNN’s exclusive rights when it crawls, scrapes, copies and distributes content from its digital and third-party platforms. It also thinks Perplexity crosses the line when its gen AI products create outputs that are identical or “substantially similar” to CNN’s content. According to the lawsuit, CNN believes more than 17,000 stories have been unlawfully copied by Perplexity. The network isn’t the only media outlet fighting Perplexity. *The New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *NY Post* and *Wall Street Journal* are also involved in legal duels against the AI startup. However, it’s CNN’s first AI-related copyright action, and media correspondent *Brian Stelter* [noted](#) that Perplexity and CNN had a failed attempt at making a content deal last year.

## THE FIGHT THAT COULD SHAPE BROADBAND BUILDOUT COSTS

Earlier this month, **Comcast** [told](#) the **FCC** that **Appalachian Power Company** (APCo) hasn’t complied with a February order about the cost of replacing utility-owned poles. Now the utility is getting its say, arguing that Comcast fails to appreciate the nuances of the Feb. 5 order. While the order found APCo’s prior policy unlawful for charging the new attacher the full upfront cost, “the Order was equally clear that Comcast must share in the pole replacement cost,” the utility said. “APCo’s position implements the February 5 Order in its totality; Comcast’s does not.” The FCC order found that when a utility-owned pole has pre-existing safety violations or repair requirements, it can’t charge a broadband provider the full cost of replacement—only for the incremental cost of installing a stronger/taller pole. Comcast complained that APCo plans to impose upon it at least 20% of the entire cost of the pole replacements. The operator argues its share should be capped at around \$100 per pole rather than a percentage of the full average replacement cost, which sits at about \$8,000 in Virginia. APCo said the difference centers on Comcast’s proposal being based solely on bare pole costs, and not including consideration of the loading capacity created by the pole replacements at issue (in addition to the vertical capacity). In fact, it says it’s rounding down from 23%, with the vertical side of the equation yielding an allocation of 10% plus an average of 13% for additional loading capacity. Comcast’s complaint also called out APCo for saying it would impose 100% of the cost of the pole replacement on Comcast if the preexisting violator does not attach to the pole. APCo wants the FCC to confirm that if a preexisting violator removes its equipment before the pole is replaced, Comcast can be billed the full replacement cost—since at that point, Comcast’s attachment is the sole reason for the replacement. All of this pole positioning is important, with a new report estimating that ISPs receiving BEAD funds will need access to an estimated 3.9 million utility-owned poles. Pole-related costs could range from \$534 million to \$4.63 billion nationwide, depending on make-ready charges and pole replacement rates, said the analysis from **Advanced Communications Law and Policy Institute** at New York Law School.

## CATCHING UP ON BROADBAND M&A

The flow of broadband M&A continued last week after Nebraska-based and **Grain Management**-owned **Great Plains Communications** confirmed a deal to snatch up **Fastwyre Broadband**’s operations in the Cornhusker State. GPC CEO *Todd Foje* said the acquisition was another step in the operator’s vision to expand throughout the Midwest. For Fastwyre, which is owned by **Madison Dearborn Partners** and **Catania Capital**, it’s the third sale in

its effort to jettison a multi-state fiber network. **Swyft Fiber** took over Fastwyre’s Louisiana, Texas and Alabama footprint in December, shortly before **Socket Fiber** bought the Missouri business in February. “Prior to the sale, Fastwyre had ~150K units across its full footprint as of mid-2025 at the total level—predominantly fiber (112K units, 75%), with little copper and cable making up the balance. GPC’s own footprint is smaller at 115K units but more fiber-heavy (94,000 units, 82%),” **New Street Research** wrote, citing its Broadband Insights data.

### SPACEX, GROUPS PUSH FOR MOBILE UNLOCKING

A trio of associations and **SpaceX** wrote to the **FCC** on Thursday advocating for mobile device unlocking requirements. The *Elon Musk*-owned LEO operator, alongside **ACA Connects**, **NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association** and **Rural Wireless Association**, asked the agency to adopt a rule stating mobile devices need to be automatically unlocked within 180 days after activation. They write that doing so would help protect consumer choice, foster competition and lower costs in the mobile marketplace by removing barriers when switching wireless providers. A 180-day “lock period” would give providers time to evaluate fraud concerns and make sure devices aren’t being used for criminal acts, the letter notes, adding that a previous 60-day locking period failed to give companies enough time to detect fraud.

### PALEY CENTER UNVEILS NEW BOARD ADDITIONS

The **Paley Center for Media** board got a little bigger Thursday. The nonprofit announced a slew of new members to its Board of Trustees: **Liberty Media** President/CEO *Derek Chang*; new **Disney** CEO *Josh D’Amaro*; *Barry Friedberg*, co-Chair of the New York Private Bank and Trust’s board; Spotify co-CEO/Director *Alex Norström*; *Adam Presser*, CEO of the **TikTok**-U.S. Data Security jv; **Verizon** CEO *Dan Schulman*; **Sony Group** President/CEO *Hiroki Totoki* and *Asha Sharma*, EVP, **Microsoft** and CEO, Xbox. **Hearst** Executive Vice Chairman and former CEO *Frank Bennack Jr.* will continue to serve as Paley’s board chair. Additionally, **Imagine Entertainment** co-Founder/Chairman *Brian Grazer* and **Publicis Connected Media** CEO *Dave Penski* will join Paley’s L.A. board.

### VERIZON NIXES VOICE ID

**Verizon** has ditched its Verizon Voice ID service, which let customers authenticate their accounts through voice biometrics that are encrypted and stored. It was the subject of a lawsuit that claimed the provider collected and stored customers’ voices without obtaining written consent. The case was voluntarily dismissed back in February after the parties had informed the court they reached a settlement in principle. No details were disclosed on the terms. Verizon said that it’s retiring Voice ID starting today, and all recorded voice prints will be securely deleted from its authentication systems.

### FIBER FRENZY

**Lightcurve**’s 8 Gig service is now available in the Central Washington areas of Ellensburg, Selah and Kittitas. Tacoma, Centralia and Chehalis are expected to receive the upgrade soon. Lightcurve uses advanced mesh WiFi technology to support up to 10 Gig speeds. The provider recently introduced a 2 Gig offering across its footprint, while also introducing the 8 Gig tier in select markets.

BASIC CABLE P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(05/18/26-05/24/26)		
MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>1.384</b>	<b>4457</b>
<b>FNC</b>	<b>0.858</b>	<b>2762</b>
<b>MS NOW</b>	<b>0.391</b>	<b>1258</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.214</b>	<b>690</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.186</b>	<b>597</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.169</b>	<b>542</b>
<b>TBS</b>	<b>0.160</b>	<b>514</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.129</b>	<b>417</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.121</b>	<b>388</b>
<b>TV LAND</b>	<b>0.120</b>	<b>387</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.119</b>	<b>384</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.118</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.117</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.110</b>	<b>354</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.107</b>	<b>345</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.105</b>	<b>338</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b>317</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.097</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>NAN</b>	<b>0.095</b>	<b>305</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.091</b>	<b>292</b>
<b>MLB</b>	<b>0.089</b>	<b>287</b>
<b>HALLMYS</b>	<b>0.089</b>	<b>285</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>NWSMX</b>	<b>0.072</b>	<b>232</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.071</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.071</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>FETV</b>	<b>0.064</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>OXY</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>204</b>
<b>AMC</b>	<b>0.063</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>FRFM</b>	<b>0.061</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>COM</b>	<b>0.053</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.051</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>IFC TV</b>	<b>0.051</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>ADSM</b>	<b>0.051</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>PRMNT</b>	<b>0.050</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>MGNLA</b>	<b>0.049</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>NATGEO</b>	<b>0.049</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>UP</b>	<b>0.048</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>NWSNTN</b>	<b>0.045</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>SDNCE</b>	<b>0.045</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>LMN</b>	<b>0.043</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>E!</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>MTV</b>	<b>0.041</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.040</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>DSCTRBO</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>CNBC</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>125</b>

\*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.