



February 20, 2026

House Economic Matters Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, MD

Re: HB 0985 - Consumer Protection – Video Streaming Services – Loudness of Commercial Advertisements

Dear House Economic Matters Committee Members,

I grew up with a grandfather that could not hear me. Corporal Truitt Reid lost his hearing in service to the United States Army in the Korean War. My mom could not hear me. She started losing her hearing at a very young age. My daughter's best friend could not hear me, she had a cochlear implant that was not always turned on. All of them use some form of hearing aid. I have struggled for years to find alternative ways to communicate with them, but one thing I always had to remember was to gauge what volume their hearing aids were on at the beginning of every conversation. Because that's how hearing aids work. They increase the ears' ability to sense and interpret sound waves.

Imagine you are watching TV on a streaming service, and you can't hear the actors whispering to one another. You adjust the volume on your hearing aids, you listen, you're at the edge of your seat, "what are they saying..." and then suddenly a loud narrator blasts over your already turned up speakers.

This is obviously a problem for all of us. It's especially a problem for people with hearing aids. People with nervous disorders. People with mobility issues. People with seizure disorders. People who cannot afford cable and suddenly have found their streaming services have started incorporating these ads even though you pay a monthly fee for access to it.

Imagine you are cooking Thanksgiving dinner with your family and in order to watch the Macy's parade, you have to run to your Roku remote and press mute every time an obnoxiously loud blast of sound signaled you that it was time for a commercial. Who could relax and enjoy family like this? \$50/month for a few streaming services that blast commercials at you every fifteen minutes and stream "live" looping programs over and over. They are creating "friction" so we will also now pay for cable or more premium subscriptions? This can't be right. You have the power to turn the volume down. Please vote favorably on HB 985.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. L. Reid". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

E. L. Reid, Esq.

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Christmas Eve 1953

Just before Christmas in 1953, Corporal Truitt Reid (age 23) led 5 other soldiers from KMAG (Korean Military Advisory Group) on a mission to deliver 6 military vehicles from Seoul to Taegu, Korea. They flew from Taegu to Seoul, picked up the 6 military vehicles and were driving them back to their home base, approximately 300 kilometers.

It is now Christmas Eve! During that long drive back to Taegu, they were traveling in heavy snow. Imagine driving in heavy snow in a jeep with no windows, doors or roof. It was very cold and getting late in the day. Realizing they were not going to be able to get back to base that evening, Corporal Reid saw a church. It was open but not occupied. There were no lights, no restrooms, no water or heat but there was a roof. So, they decided to spend the night there, out of the weather. Their beds were hard pews, with no bedding or heat sources.

On Christmas morning, they awoke, hungry and cold, but dry. The group went without breakfast due to the depletion of their K rations brought for the mission, and their canteens contained only a minimal amount of water. The snow had stopped so they were ready to complete their journey. However, before leaving, Truitt wanted to get photos of all of them. This photo is of him on a Christmas that he will never forget.