

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 4, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

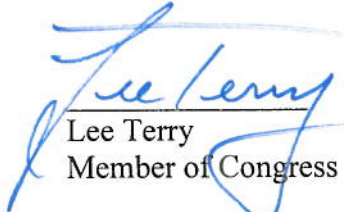
The Universal Service Fund (USF) and intercarrier compensation policies have long played a role in ensuring that telecommunication services are made available to and remain affordable in communities across the nation. As communications technologies rapidly evolve, these programs are in serious need of reform if they're to continue to benefit consumers and spur job creation as they have in the past.

It's our judgment that the FCC must act swiftly yet carefully to enact reforms that allow all Americans - particularly those in hard-to-serve rural communities - access to the burgeoning services and opportunities that are being created via innovations in broadband technology. Similarly, we believe the FCC should pursue a USF reform framework that is fiscally responsible, enforceable, and sustainable, providing opportunities for a wide range of robust broadband technologies to compete. To accomplish this, it's critical that those overseeing the fund work to end duplicative subsidies and to more appropriately direct funds into areas where support is needed to deploy and maintain affordable, high-quality broadband services.

Many key stakeholders have weighed in on the Universal Service Fund debate, contributing a number of reform proposals. Among those proposals offered is a plan comprised of two complementary strategies: the America's Broadband Connectivity plan (ABC) and the Joint Rural Association plan. One advantage of this approach is that taken together, this framework appears to embody the core principles of the Commission's National Broadband Plan - transforming the Universal Service Fund to bring sustainable broadband service to communities across the nation by supporting the infrastructure in a competitively neutral manner that will enable both wireline and wireless broadband in rural communities. While many details remain to be fleshed out by the FCC, this framework clearly creates a path forward for comprehensive USF and intercarrier compensation reform.

We strongly urge the FCC to maintain the key elements of the America's Broadband Connectivity and Joint Rural Association proposals as you consider other proposals to revise the plan. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your attention and prompt response in this matter.

Sincerely,


Lee Terry
Member of Congress


Mike Ross
Member of Congress

Steven Dean

K. Michael Lewis

Cathy McMahon Rodger

Jenny Reberg

Sam Cole

Norm Dick

Charles F. Bass

Tom Sallam

Mike McIntyre

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