



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**OPASTCO and WTA MEMBERS KICK OFF  
L&R CONFERENCE WITH JOINT BRIEFING AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY  
CONGRESSMAN LEE TERRY**

*A Record Breaking 140 Rural Advocates Carry Messages on  
USF, Intercarrier Compensation, Broadband and Video Content to Capitol Hill*

WASHINGTON – At the first-ever joint Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies’ (OPASTCO) and Western Telecommunications Alliance (WTA) 2008 Legislative & Regulatory Conference in Washington, D.C., 140 rural advocates traveled to our nation’s capital to be briefed on crucial rural telecommunications issues and educate their members of Congress on how these issues affect their home districts. Keynote Speaker Congressman Lee Terry (R – Neb.) stated, “My goal is to make sure that everyone has access to the best communications,” and cited his continuing efforts with Rep. Boucher to promote the Universal Service Reform Act of 2007 on the Hill. Terry also applauded the efforts of attendees to bring broadband to rural America, “Those in the room have done an excellent job of providing advanced services in their areas.”

Regarding the joint conference, WTA Executive Vice President Kelly Worthington explained, “On many issues, WTA and OPASTCO share similar positions. It was a natural fit. The conference also was an opportunity for WTA members to add their voices to OPASTCO’s during this push to educate the Hill about universal service, phantom traffic, broadband and video content.”

“The combined conference adds value for all of our members,” OPASTCO President John Rose stated. “The more rural telecommunications representatives we can get to lobby Capitol Hill, the more our message gets out there. Congress needs to understand how telecom policy affects not only rural constituents, but also our entire country’s network infrastructure and economy.”

Issues briefing papers from the 2008 OPASTCO/WTA L&R Conference may be found at [www.opastco.org](http://www.opastco.org).

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## **OPASTCO/WTA L&R Conference/2-2-2**

### **About OPASTCO:**

The Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies (OPASTCO) represents close to 600 small, independently owned, local telecommunications companies serving primarily rural areas of the United States and Canada. OPASTCO membership includes both commercial companies and cooperatives, which range in size from fewer than 100 to 100,000 access lines, and collectively serve more than 5.5 million customers. OPASTCO represents rural telecommunications interests before federal regulatory bodies and Congress, provides publications, and holds two conventions annually in January and July of each year, addressing the needs of the small telecommunications industry. The association has an affiliate 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Foundation for Rural Education and Development (FRED). Visit the OPASTCO Web site at [www.opastco.org](http://www.opastco.org).

### **About WTA:**

Western Telecommunications Alliance represents over 250 rural telecommunications companies in 24 states west of the Mississippi River. Most members serve fewer than 3,000 customers overall and fewer than 500 customers per exchange. For more information about WTA, contact Kelly Worthington, Executive Vice President at (406) 443-6377; [Kelly@w-t-a.org](mailto:Kelly@w-t-a.org); or visit [www.w-t-a.org](http://www.w-t-a.org).

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