

COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES

COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE

COMMITTEE ON
BUDGET

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Cynthia M. Lummis
Congress of the United States
Wyoming

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June 1, 2010

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

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

On May 28, 2010, Representative Sam Graves and Representative Betsy Markey sent a letter to your office signed by 38 Members of Congress regarding the recently submitted *Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan*. I write today to associate myself with the sentiment of my rural colleagues regarding the National Broadband Plan (NBP) as outlined in that letter.

As you likely know, Wyoming is the least populated state in the country. It is also the tenth largest by land mass. That kind of population density presents unique and exceedingly difficult challenges for meeting Wyoming's communications needs. At a time when the United States was just beginning to realize the promise of voice service, it could have been the country's policy to simply leave difficult areas like Wyoming behind. Instead, we collectively decided that it would be in our national interest to bring every area along. The policy of universal service and later the Universal Service Fund (USF) were instrumental in reaching even the most rural communities in my state with voice service.

Like universal voice was to its time, the importance of broadband to our national economy cannot be understated. I, like my colleagues who have signed the attached letter, am concerned that the NBP fails to recognize how desperately rural economies need adequate broadband for everyday commerce, telemedicine, distance learning and so much more. Unfortunately, it appears the NBP will only widen the digital divide.

I urge you to modify the NBP recommendations to consider the needs of Wyoming and rural America. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Cynthia M. Lummis
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 28, 2010

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

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

Thank you for recently submitting to Congress *Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan*. We are writing to express our concern about the negative impact the National Broadband Plan (NBP) would have on rural areas, and the people living in these areas, if it were implemented as proposed by the staff of the Federal Communications Commission.

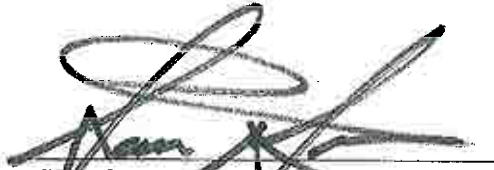
In 2009, Congress mandated a plan that included "a detailed strategy for achieving affordability and maximizing use of broadband to advance consumer welfare, civic participation, public safety and homeland security, community development, health care delivery, energy independence, education, employee training, private sector investment, entrepreneurial activity, job creation and economic growth, and other national purposes." Our concern is the NBP sets the United States on a course toward a greater digital divide between urban and rural areas by proposing 4 megabits per second (Mbps) as the goal for rural regions while boasting about the benefits of 100 Mbps for more densely populated areas. Establishing such a low threshold (4 Mbps) for rural residents and businesses is not enough broadband capacity for the next several years, let alone the future demands of commerce, health care, education, energy and public safety.

Over the last three decades, small independent communications carriers have invested in networks in rural areas based on a relatively predictable regulatory structure and support provided by the Universal Service Fund, both of which have led to success in the deployment of voice and broadband service throughout much of the rural areas they serve. As proposed, the NBP abandons this successful policy approach endangering our national statutory goal of affordable and comparable communications service for all consumers, including those living in rural and insular areas.

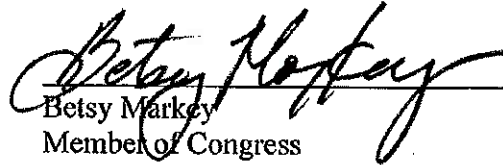
Our grave concern is that implementing the NBP as recommended will not provide all Americans with adequate broadband service because it puts at risk the regulatory structure and support that rural communications providers need to maintain and expand their networks. The plan as written will lead to job loss, less investment in rural areas, a further erosion of state and local economies, and the deterioration of communications services for our constituents. The economic future of our nation is riding on the

development of a robust communications network for all citizens. Thus, we request that you seriously consider these concerns and that you take the appropriate steps to modify the plan's recommendations to ensure all Americans play a role in, and benefit from, the global communications leadership Congress envisioned this plan evoking.

Sincerely,




Sam Graves
Member of Congress




Betsy Markey
Member of Congress




Lee Terry
Member of Congress



Leonard Boswell
Member of Congress

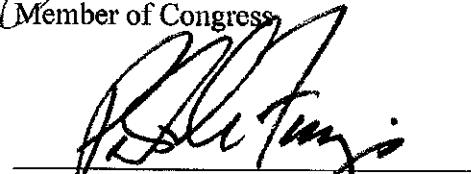


Frank Lucas
Member of Congress



Jim Oberstar
Member of Congress

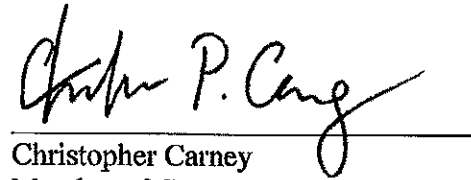
Jerry Moran
Jerry Moran
Member of Congress



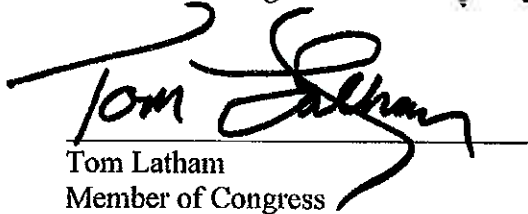
Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



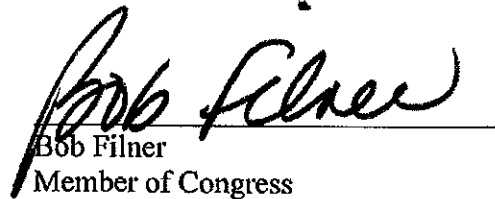
Blaine Luetkemeyer
Member of Congress



Christopher Carney
Member of Congress



Tom Latham
Member of Congress



Bob Filner
Member of Congress



Lamar Smith
Member of Congress



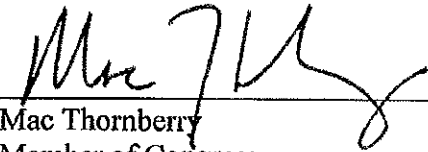
David Loebsock
Member of Congress



Mike Simpson
Member of Congress



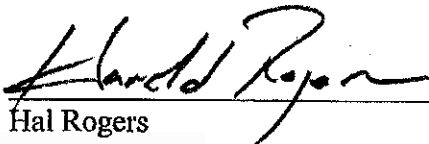
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Mac Thornberry
Member of Congress



Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



Hal Rogers
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress



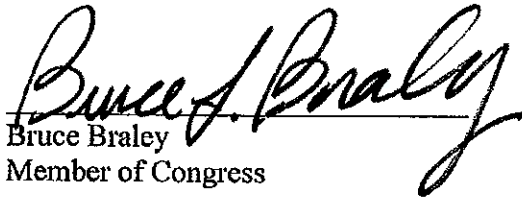
Randy Neugebauer
Member of Congress



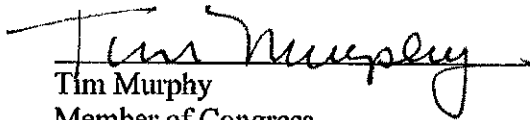
Bill Owens
Member of Congress



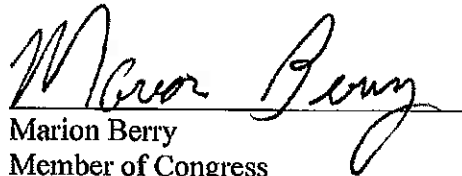
Howard Coble
Member of Congress



Bruce Braley
Member of Congress



Tim Murphy
Member of Congress



Marion Berry
Member of Congress



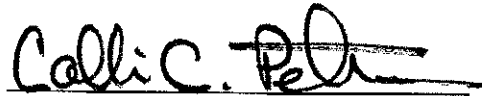
Steve King
Member of Congress



Timothy Johnson
Member of Congress



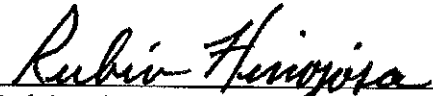
Lynn Jenkins
Member of Congress



Collin Peterson
Member of Congress



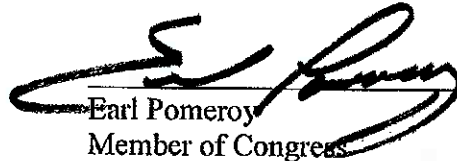
John Boozman
Member of Congress



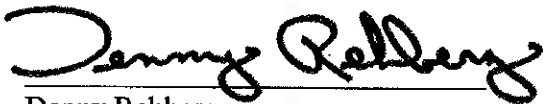
Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress



Tom Cole
Member of Congress



Earl Pomeroy
Member of Congress



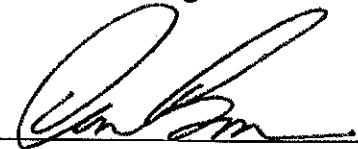
Denny Rehberg
Member of Congress



Mike Ross
Member of Congress



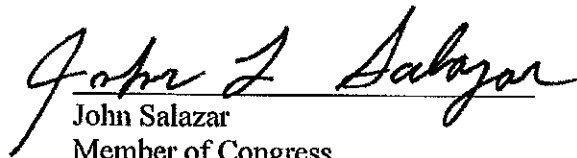
Don Young
Member of Congress



Dan Boren
Member of Congress



Lincoln Davis
Member of Congress



John Salazar
Member of Congress