

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 20, 2012

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Dortch:

During recent meetings with rural telecommunications carriers, our offices were advised of the incorrect data inputs used by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the FCC's regression analysis impact calculations and the resulting loss of Universal Service support for West River Cooperative Telephone Company, Bison, SD and Kennebec Telephone Company, Kennebec, SD. West River and Kennebec are both small rural local exchange carriers serving rural and remote communities in South Dakota with voice and broadband services.

We were also advised that West River and Kennebec have notified the FCC of the incorrect information on several occasions, as listed below:

SDTA Reply Comments – February 17, 2012
Letters sent to Amy Bender – March 2, 2012
ExParte with Commission Staff – March 19, 2012
Packet of Information Filed – April 10, 2012

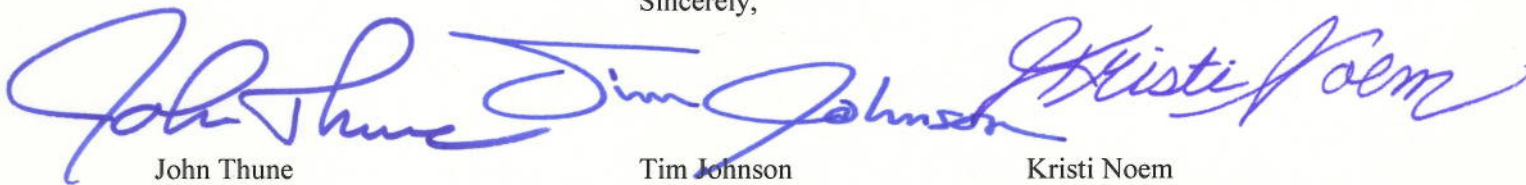
We understand that the data used by the FCC deviated significantly from the actual values. For example, in West River's case, the FCC model data attributed 260.557 square miles of total land area to West River, whereas it actually serves an area that covers over 6,200 square miles. To our knowledge, the Commission has not corrected this error, which gives us cause for concern.

While the individual errors and support reductions for these companies may appear insignificant in relation to the overall FCC analysis, the loss of over \$500,000 is significant to these companies. It is important that the FCC correct these errors to ensure that rural consumers served by these companies continue to have access to quality and affordable telecommunications service.

Under the Commission's current reform plan, the companies serving rural and remote areas will experience a significant erosion of their support and revenue streams over the next several years. At a minimum, these companies should expect that accurate data is being gathered and utilized to determine the impact on their respective organizations.

We trust that you will give West River and Kennebec's latest request your utmost attention and provide these companies with the corrections they are requesting.

Sincerely,



John Thune
U.S. Senator

Tim Johnson
U.S. Senator

Kristi Noem
U.S. Representative