



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WTA Applauds Commerce Committee Passage of the “Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act” to Address Rural Call Completion Problems**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 29, 2016)** – WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband applauds the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation for approving S. 827, the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act today. In particular, WTA appreciates the work that bill sponsor Senator Amy Klobuchar (MN) and her staff put in to tirelessly push the Committee to address this issue. WTA also thanks Chairman John Thune (SD) and his staff for committing to work to ensure that calls to rural America are completed.

The legislation directs the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to address the ongoing problem of telephone calls not always being completed to rural areas. Specifically, the bill would require all intermediate providers of voice communications services to register with the FCC and comply with service quality standards established by the agency. For several years, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of telephone calls not being completed in rural areas mostly due to the use of least cost routers that, at times, do not terminate calls in rural areas because of the cost.

“We’re grateful for the work and leadership that Senator Klobuchar, original cosponsor Senator John Tester (MT), and Chairman Thune have done on this issue,” said Derrick Owens, WTA’s Vice President of Government Affairs. “We believe this legislation complements the work being done at the FCC on call completion and that it provides additional assurance that all calls will be completed with a high quality of service. Having a phone call reach its intended recipient has been a basic standard of our communications network for decades. We urge the full Senate to take up this legislation and pass it.”

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*WTA represents more than 300 small, rural telecommunications carriers providing voice, video and data services in the United States. WTA’s members serve some of the most rural and hard-to-serve communities in the country and are on the forefront of bringing 21st Century telecommunications services to rural America. To learn more about WTA, visit [www.w-t-a.org](http://www.w-t-a.org).*