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WTA Praises Bicameral Approach to Address Rural Call Completion Problems

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 11, 2017) – WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband praises Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), John Tester (D-MT), Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation Chairman John Thune (R-SD) and Representatives David Young (R-IA) and Peter Welch (D-VT) for introducing the Improving Rural Call Quality and Reliability Act of 2017 today. This legislation would help ensure that telephone calls to rural areas are completed appropriately.

Specifically, the legislation would require all intermediate providers of voice communications services to register with the Federal Communications Commission and comply with service quality standards established by the agency.

“We’re pleased to see that Senator Klobuchar and Representative Young have reintroduced this much-needed legislation in the 115th Congress. They’ve been persistent leaders on this issue,” said Derrick Owens, WTA’s Vice President of Government Affairs. “We hope these bills move quickly through the committee process and receive supportive votes from their respective chambers. It’s unfortunate that telephone calls, a basic function of our communications network, aren’t being completed to some rural areas. Our members and their customers have been dealing with this issue for far too long. It’s time to pass this legislation and get it signed into law to help ensure calls to rural America reach their final destination.”

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation passed the same legislation last year but it was not voted on by the full Senate. Similar legislation was passed by the House last year.

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WTA represents more than 350 small, rural telecommunications carriers providing voice, broadband and video-related 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.