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**WTA Welcomes Legislation Introduced by Representative Huffman to Incentivize Communications Permitting on Federal Lands**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 16, 2017)** – WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband welcomes Representative Jared Huffman’s (D-CA) Public Lands Telecommunications Act, which was introduced today. The bill would allow federal agencies that manage federal lands to retain rental fees associated with communications facilities on federal lands rather than have the funds go to the general treasury. The funds could be used to expedite the permitting of and improve the management of communications sites.

“WTA members are small rural telecom providers and they tend to face costly and time-consuming barriers to obtaining permits to construct broadband facilities on federal lands,” said Derrick Owens, WTA’s Vice President of Government Affairs. “We are hopeful that if land management agencies have additional resources to put towards approving use of lands for communications purposes, that it will help get high-speed broadband to parts of the country that go without. We look forward to working with Representative Huffman and others in Congress to advance the shared goal of broadband buildout in rural America.”

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*WTA represents more than 325 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](http://www.w-t-a.org).*