



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Derrick Owens, (202) 548-0202

**ERIC KEBER JOINS WTA STAFF AS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
AFFAIRS MANAGER**

Washington, DC (Dec. 13, 2006) -- Western Telecommunications Alliance announces today that Eric Keber will be joining its staff in Washington, DC. Mr. Keber will assume the position of federal government affairs manager where his responsibilities will be lobbying Congress on rural telecommunications issues.

In 2004, Keber began working for Congressman Gil Gutknecht (MN-01) as a legislative assistant. Earlier this year, he was promoted to legislative director. Keber worked on the Congressman's telecommunications policies and assisted him in his duties as co-chair of the House Rural Caucus' Telecom Task Force. Prior to joining the staff of Congressman Gutknecht, Keber worked for Congressman Dave Weldon (FL-15). Mr. Keber received his Bachelors degree in Economics and Political Science from Bucknell University in 2000.

"We are truly excited to have Eric join our staff", said Kelly Worthington, WTA's Executive Vice President. "Eric will be a valuable asset in WTA's efforts of working with the Congress and regulators to address the many issues facing rural telecom providers today", said Worthington. We were truly fortunate to be able hire someone of Eric's caliber. He has a strong knowledge base on rural telecom issues, and this will allow him to hit the ground running when the 110th Congress convenes. I look forward to having Eric join our team", said Derrick Owens, WTA's Director of Government Affairs.

###

Western Telecommunications Alliance represents approximately 250 rural telecommunications companies in 24 states west of the Mississippi River. Most members serve less than 3,000 customers overall, and less than 500 customers per exchange. Western Telecommunications Alliance aims to unite a diverse industry to deliver influence in the western states and in Washington, DC that reflects its members' importance in providing high quality telecommunications services to rural America. For more information about WTA, contact Kelly Worthington, Executive Vice President at (406) 443-6377; kelly@w-t-a.org; or visit www.w-t-a.org.