



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WTA Applauds the Introduction of the Bipartisan  
Reforming Broadband Connectivity Act**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 28, 2023)** – Today, Senators Amy Klobuchar and John Thune (R-SD), along with their colleagues in the House of Representatives led by Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO), introduced legislation that requires the Federal Communications Commission to, after submitting a study and report to Congress, complete a rulemaking within one year that modernizes the Universal Service Fund contribution system and expands the contribution base. WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband strongly supports this bipartisan, bicameral effort.

“WTA supports efforts to modernize the USF contributions system. It makes no sense to be assessing long-distance voice revenue to fund what is now a broadband-focused fund,” said Derrick Owens, Senior Vice President of Government & Industry Affairs. “While the FCC has the authority to expand the contributions base and put the Fund on a sustainable path for the future, it has chosen not to do so. Congress should pass this legislation to require the FCC to act.”

The USF currently helps support the construction, operations, and maintenance of rural broadband networks, the subsidization of broadband connections for low-income Americans, and the connection of school, libraries, and rural health care institutions to the Internet. USF is funded by an assessment on telecommunications provider revenue from long-distance voice service. This revenue has been decreasing for over 15 years. The contributions factor, or the percentage assessment that gets passed onto customers, has been rising over that same time period, from just over 11% in 2007 to over 32% today.

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*WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband is a national trade association that represents more than 370 small, rural telecommunications carriers providing broadband, voice, 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).*