



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Derrick Owens
202-548-0202, derrick@w-t-a.org**

FCC Misses Opportunity on USF Contributions Modernization

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 25, 2024) – WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband is disappointed the FCC has not taken the opportunity to address the modernization of the Universal Service Fund contribution methodology in its approval today of the Order on Safeguarding and Securing the Open Internet. The following statement can be attributed to Derrick Owens, WTA’s Senior Vice President of Government and Industry Affairs:

“In the Open Internet Order, the FCC chose to forbear from assessing broadband for contributions to USF. This is a missed opportunity that could have been used to put USF on a more sustainable footing for the years ahead.

“In meetings with Commissioner staff prior to this vote, we recommended that instead of forbearing, the Commission should defer the question of whether and how to assess USF contributions upon broadband to a further rulemaking to modernize and expand the USF contribution system. Reclassification of broadband as a Title II service would not mean immediate assessment of broadband. The FCC would have needed to develop a mechanism to do so, which could have been part of a future proceeding.”

###

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.