



### ***What is Save Rural Broadband?***

Save Rural Broadband was created to educate Americans about proposals currently being considered by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that could have a detrimental impact on millions of Americans and on communities that rely on rural broadband Internet networks and to advocate for responsible reform that will sustain these vital networks that generate economic prosperity and enhance the quality of life for all Americans.

### ***What Is the Mission of Save Rural Broadband?***

Our mission is to: (1) show the Congress and the Obama Administration how rule changes being considered by the FCC will have a negative effect on broadband networks in rural communities, and (2) urge Congress and the Obama Administration to intercede to ensure that a more reasonable alternative set of reforms will be adopted.

### ***Why is Rural Broadband Important?***

Rural broadband has a significant impact on the quality of life in rural America and on the broader U.S. economy by helping businesses and entrepreneurs grow and prosper. It allows Americans living in rural areas to communicate with the wider world and the wider world to communicate with them.

### ***What Is the Universal Service Fund?***

The principle of "universal service" precedes the Communications Act of 1934, arising out of a commonly shared national goal to ensure that those areas not served by "Ma Bell" at the time would be able to connect with the rest of the country. Congress codified this policy as a matter of law in 1996, and expressly directed the FCC to carry out this policy through the

creation of a “specific, predictable, and sufficient” Universal Service Fund (USF).

The USF program created in the wake of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 ensures that rural telecom companies and cooperatives receive support to reimburse a portion of the cost incurred in offering communications services in high-cost rural areas. This federal USF support, together with their own substantial private investments, has been essential in enabling rural providers to deploy high-quality networks in rural America while providing services to consumers and businesses at affordable rates.

This system has been a success and generated benefits to millions of Americans, businesses and state and local governments.

***Some at the FCC believe that wireless is the answer, not wireline.***

***How do you respond?***

It is not an either/or situation. These services are complementary. There is a role for both, however, it is important to note that even with wireless services, it is necessary to have a wireline network to connect cell towers back to the regional or national network. And the greater the wireless data demands are, the more towers – and thus more wires – are needed to handle all of that traffic.

***Why shouldn't the FCC direct more funds toward “unserved” rural areas in which larger carriers operate?***

There are many ways in which to promote greater broadband investment where it does not exist today without undermining the availability and affordability of broadband access in those rural areas where it is provided today. A careful balance must be struck, and the rules being considered by the FCC don't strike that balance.

