



INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE & TELECOMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE

January 31, 2008

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Senate Commerce Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ted Stevens
Vice Chair
Senate Commerce Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Vice Chairman Stevens,

The members of the Independent Telephone and Telecommunication Alliance (ITTA) commend the FCC for releasing a group of Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that address fundamental policy principles and operational aspect of the Universal Service Fund (USF). Long-term reform of USF is essential to our members continuing to serve their 26 million customers in 44 states, most of whom are found in the most rural and costliest to serve parts of the country.

Along with the FCC, ITTA looks forward to working with your committee as you address USF reform. Under your leadership, we are hopeful that you will agree with the FCC that the so-called 'identical support rule' should be retired and that USF support should be based upon carriers' actual costs, rather than arbitrary measurements. In addition to the identical support repeal we are encouraged by Joint Board's general recommendations to ensure the viability of carriers of last resort and to assist the further provision of mobile and broadband services throughout the Nation.

As we move forward with USF reform at the FCC and within your committee we remain hopeful that this reform will reflect the refinements necessary to ensure the vitality and viability of the underlying National telephone network. Such reforms must also enable greater deployment of advanced services consistent with public interest.

Sincerely,

Curt Stamp
President
Independent Telephone and Telecommunications Alliance

cc. Members of the Energy and Commerce Committee