



INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE & TELECOMMUNICATIONS ALLIANCE

December 17, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, House of Representatives
H-232, US Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20005

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
H-204, US Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Boehner:

The Independent Telephone and Telecommunications Alliance (ITTA) is an alliance of mid-size telecommunication providers. ITTA members serve 20 million access lines in primarily rural areas of 44 states and collectively employ over 54,000 employees in high-paying, skilled jobs.

On December 21, 2010, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is expected to vote on the "Open Internet Order." The order could compromise the success of the current "light touch" approach to broadband policy, and could stifle innovation, jobs, investment, and consumer choice. As ITTA noted in our comments to the FCC on October 12, 2010, there is "no factual basis to regulate (broadband), only unfounded fears." In fact, recent FCC Working Papers reveal that 71 percent of broadband adopters perceive their choice of competitive providers in the marketplace, and that more than two-thirds of users who switch service providers cite price and speed as their motivation. Together, these facts evidence consumer awareness and advantage in a vibrant and competitive market, begging the question of why the FCC would now opt to interfere.

If, however, the Commission determines to impose regulatory intervention to fix what is not broken, then regulation should be applied in an equitably-effective manner and remain technology neutral. Failure to incorporate regulatory parity will send improper signals to the marketplace and damage technological innovation and consumer welfare. In addition to regulatory parity ITTA strongly believes that Congress must have a prevalent role in providing oversight and ultimately, codifying broadband policy.

In closing, ITTA remains committed to working with Congress and the FCC to promote a broadband policy that will encourage broadband deployment.

Sincerely,

Paul Raak
Vice President, Legislative Affairs
Independent Telephone and Telecommunications Alliance

Cc: Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman
Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Joe Barton
Subcommittee on Communications Chairman Rick Boucher
Subcommittee on Communications Ranking Member Cliff Stearns
Energy and Commerce incoming Chairman Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Communications incoming Chairman Greg Walden
Members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee