

RICK CRAWFORD
1ST DISTRICT, ARKANSAS

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OF
LIVESTOCK, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
AND CREDIT

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
1711 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2013

Mr. Julius Genachowski
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
Room: 8-B201
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *In the Matter of Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90,
Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Released: Nov. 19, 2012)

Mr. Chairman:

I write to express my support for the Connect America Fund (CAF) and ask that you promptly deploy CAF resources for the good of rural consumers. At this stage, we must observe that relatively modest gains have been achieved for rural America. While the FCC has set aside \$600 million to invest in new broadband deployment during 2012 and 2013, much of this capital remains on the sidelines and the wait for broadband continues.

As the FCC has noted, more than 80 percent of Americans without broadband live in rural areas served by price cap companies. That amounts to more than 18 million people. CAF Phase I was designed to bring rapid broadband expansion in these areas, and if CAF-I lags, so will broadband deployment. The current slow pace is unfortunate when you consider that the FCC financed state-of-the-art networks for thousands of other rural Americans a decade or more ago.

Fortunately, a favorable outcome is at hand in the FCC's November 19th further notice (FNPRM), which says the goal for the FCC should be to refine the CAF rules to enable price cap carriers to bring service to eligible unserved households as quickly as possible. We strongly encourage the FCC to proceed with a second round of CAF projects in 2013 that fully utilizes the \$600 million set aside for this important work during 2012 and 2013.

Broadband is an economic driver that provides rural Americans access to educational opportunities, remote healthcare applications, and high-speed wireless service. Applications relying on a robust broadband infrastructure are now essential in agricultural markets, for emerging small businesses, and for consumer access to online retailers. It is vital to our rural constituents that the FCC quickly refine the rules so these funds are rapidly invested in broadband infrastructure that will help attract more businesses and jobs to these areas. We cannot continue to leave these Americans behind.

Sincerely,

Rick Crawford


Member of Congress

WASHINGTON, DC
1711 LONGWORTH HOB
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE 202 225-4076
FAX 202 225-5602

JONESBORO
2400 EAST HIGHLAND
SUITE 300
JONESBORO, AR 72401
PHONE 870 203-0540
FAX 870 203-0542

CABOT
112 SOUTH FIRST STREET
CABOT, AR 72033
PHONE 501-843-3043
FAX 501-843-4955

MOUNTAIN HOME
1001 HIGHWAY 62 EAST
SUITE 9
MOUNTAIN HOME, AR 72653
PHONE 870-424-2075
FAX 870-424-3149

WWW.CRAWFORDHOUSE.GOV

TIM GRIFFIN

2ND DISTRICT, ARKANSAS
ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP

1501 NORTH UNIVERSITY AVENUE
SUITE 150
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72207
PHONE: (501) 324-5941
FAX: (501) 324-6029

1232 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE: (202) 225-2506
FAX: (202) 225-5903

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0402

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

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GLOBAL HEALTH, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

February 11, 2013

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Room 8-B201
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *In the Matter of Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90,
Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Released: Nov. 19, 2012)

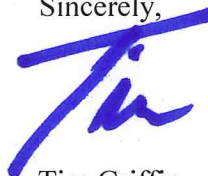
Dear Chairman Genachowski:

We write to express our support for the proposed modifications to the rules governing Connect America Fund (CAF) Phase I incremental support, which are intended to further accelerate the deployment of broadband to consumers who lack access to robust broadband. While the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has set aside \$600 million to invest in new broadband deployment in 2012 and 2013, much of this capital has not been utilized, and thus far, only modest gains have been achieved to extend broadband to rural America, which is readily apparent in the rural areas of Arkansas's Second Congressional District, which I represent.

Broadband is an economic driver that provides rural Americans access to educational opportunities, remote health care applications, and high-speed wireless service. Applications relying on a robust broadband infrastructure are now essential for agriculture markets and emerging small businesses, as well as consumer access to online retailers. It is vital to our rural constituents that the FCC quickly refine these rules so these funds that have been set aside are rapidly invested in broadband infrastructure, which will help attract more businesses and jobs to these areas.

Connecting Americans who would otherwise be without broadband service is the purpose of the CAF Phase I allotment. We find it encouraging that the FCC realizes the need for reforming the CAF Phase I rules, and we encourage the FCC to adopt rules to enable providers who are willing to make the immediate investments necessary to bring broadband services to these rural areas. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Tim Griffin
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 13, 2013

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

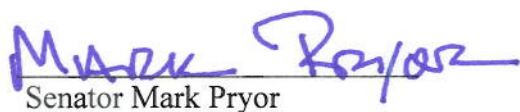
We write to you regarding the Commission's continued efforts to reform the Universal Service Fund (USF) and its potential impact on the advancement of broadband access in Arkansas. Specifically, we wish to express our concerns related to the implementation of the Connect America Fund (CAF) and a proposed rule that could significantly delay rural broadband development.


More than 80 percent of Americans without broadband, including many in Arkansas, live in rural areas served by price cap companies. As you know, CAF Phase I was designed to bring rapid broadband expansion to these areas by allocating \$300 million annually for broadband development until a permanent funding mechanism, CAF Phase 2, is operational. It is our understanding that rather than finalizing new rules to move forward with a second round funding, the Commission is now considering withholding all of the remaining funds until Phase II is can be implemented.

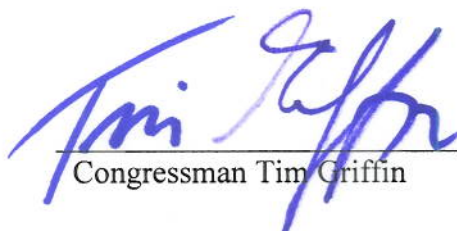
In light of the significant delay to Phase II, we urge the Commission to promptly finalize new rules for CAF Phase I incremental support so that the remaining \$185 million from 2012, as well as the original \$300 million anticipated for 2013, will be quickly invested in broadband for rural communities.

We commend the Commission for its ongoing efforts regarding USF reform, and we look forward to continuing our work with you on this and related matters. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Senator Mark Pryor


Senator John Boozman


Congressman Tim Griffin