

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 8, 2013

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

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

We write to urge the Federal Communications Commission to consider ways to fully utilize all currently available Connect America Fund (CAF) resources in 2013. Especially in states like Iowa, too few Americans have access to reliable broadband service in their homes and businesses. Such access is critical to economic growth, job creation and global competitiveness.

We are grateful that the FCC has set aside \$600 million for the first phase of this transition, CAF-1. We are concerned, however, about the rules the Commission has put into place concerning the deployment of CAF-1 funds. These rules appear so restrictive that it is difficult for carriers to utilize them to deploy broadband, including in Iowa. There is clear evidence that more flexibility is needed so available funds can be used to expand broadband to consumers and businesses, especially in rural areas.

We agree with the goal the FCC stated in its December 28th Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that the CAF rules should be refined to enable price cap carriers to bring service to unserved and underserved households as quickly as possible. We applaud the FCC for issuing the NPRM, making clear your willingness to reexamine the funding guidelines. In establishing rules, the FCC should ensure enough flexibility that all the funds remaining can and will be allocated.

The ability of rural Americans, like those in our state, to compete in the digital age depends on access to reliable broadband. It is critical for our rural constituents that vital funds set aside for CAF not be lost and that they be utilized as fully as possible for rural broadband deployment.

Sincerely,



Tom Harkin
United States Senator



Charles Grassley
United States Senator



IOWA
CONGRESSMAN
TOM LATHAM

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

January 9, 2013

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

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

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

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As you know, the success of the National Broadband Plan is vital to consumers in rural America, particularly the Connect American Fund (CAF). 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, as rural consumers continue to wait for affordable access to broadband.

As the FCC has noted, more than 80 percent of Americans without broadband live in those rural areas served by price cap companies. That totals 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 slow pace seems unfair to these consumers, considering that the FCC financed state-of-the-art networks for thousands of other rural Americans a decade or more ago.

I am encouraged by the FCC's November 19th further notice (FNPRM), which lays out a goal for the FCC to refine CAF rules to help price cap carriers to bring service to eligible unserved households as quickly as possible. I strongly urge the FCC to proceed with a second round of CAF projects in 2013 that fully utilize the \$600 million set aside for this important work during 2012 and 2013.

Broadband is essential to the economic future of rural America, providing access to educational opportunities, online business applications, remote health care services and high-speed wireless service. It is critical to our rural constituents that the FCC quickly refine the rules so these funds can be rapidly invested in broadband infrastructure that will help attract more businesses and jobs to these areas. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Latham". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tom Latham
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1505

January 9, 2012

Congressman Steve King
2210 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street Southwest
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 Mr. Chairman:

I respect you for taking on a tough and controversial task – overhauling the Universal Service Fund (USF) and intercarrier compensation and creating the Connect America Fund (CAF). It is vital to rural America that your reforms succeed. At this stage, I must observe that relatively modest gains have been achieved for rural consumers. 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 is stretching on.

As the FCC has noted, more than 80 percent of Americans without broadband live in those 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 regrettable 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. I 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 my 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve King
Member of Congress