



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 20, 2015

The Honorable Gregg Harper
U.S. House of Representatives
307 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Harper:

Thank you for your letter expressing interest in how best to update our Universal Service Fund (USF) policies to reflect current consumer mobility demand and need. You noted that advanced wireless services are particularly important in rural and high-cost areas, as represented throughout much of Mississippi. Your views are very important, and they will both be included in the record of the proceeding and be considered as part of the Commission's review.

The universal service program is one of the most important tools at our disposal to ensure that consumers and businesses in rural America have similar opportunities as their urban and suburban counterparts to be active participants in the United States of the 21st century. In the 2011 *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, the Commission took significant strides to update the universal service program to reflect the realities of the 21st century. In particular, the Commission adopted specific performance goals to preserve and advance the universal availability of voice service and to ensure the universal availability of modern networks capable of providing advanced mobile voice and broadband services.

A core component of the Commission's 2011 USF reforms was the creation of the Connect America Fund to preserve and advance voice and robust broadband services, both fixed and mobile, in high-cost areas of the nation that the marketplace would otherwise not serve. The Commission's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau completed the auction for Mobility Fund Phase I on September 27, 2012, with 33 winning bidders eligible to receive a total of up to \$299,998,632 in one-time support to provide 3G or better mobile voice and broadband services, with disbursements beginning in April 2013 and anticipated to continue through 2016 as carriers complete their deployments. In Mississippi, there were two winning bids by Powertel/Memphis, Inc., a subsidiary of T-Mobile, for support up to \$1,829,212, and its support was authorized in June 2013. Powertel is constructing facilities for 3G service and has until June 2015 to complete the project. Powertel reported in its annual report that all network design and leases have been completed and the deployment is in progress.

Last April, the Commission adopted a *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM)* to seek comments on proposals to target funds to support mobile services in a Mobility Fund Phase II. In the *FNPRM*, we reaffirmed our commitment to preserving and advancing mobile voice and broadband services in high-cost areas. In light of marketplace developments in the

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Our goal is consistent with yours: how best to use the limited funds available to us to ensure that rural Americans can take advantage of the opportunities presented by a “mobile society.” I also welcome a dialogue with stakeholders about how best to accomplish our shared objectives, and I look forward to working with you as we continue reforming and modernizing the USF high-cost program to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler", is written over a horizontal line.

Tom Wheeler



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

January 20, 2015

The Honorable Alan Nunnelee
U.S. House of Representatives
1427 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Nunnelee:

Thank you for your letter expressing interest in how best to update our Universal Service Fund (USF) policies to reflect current consumer mobility demand and need. You noted that advanced wireless services are particularly important in rural and high-cost areas, as represented throughout much of Mississippi. Your views are very important, and they will both be included in the record of the proceeding and be considered as part of the Commission's review.

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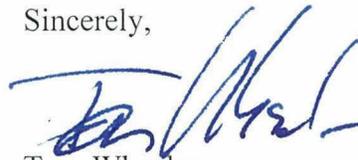
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Tom Wheeler



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

January 20, 2015

The Honorable Steven M. Palazzo
U.S. House of Representatives
331 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Palazzo:

Thank you for your letter expressing interest in how best to update our Universal Service Fund (USF) policies to reflect current consumer mobility demand and need. You noted that advanced wireless services are particularly important in rural and high-cost areas, as represented throughout much of Mississippi. Your views are very important, and they will both be included in the record of the proceeding and be considered as part of the Commission's review.

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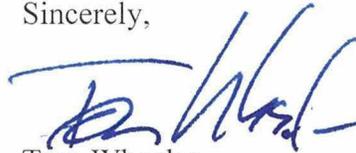
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

January 20, 2015

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
2466 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Thompson:

Thank you for your letter expressing interest in how best to update our Universal Service Fund (USF) policies to reflect current consumer mobility demand and need. You noted that advanced wireless services are particularly important in rural and high-cost areas, as represented throughout much of Mississippi. Your views are very important, and they will both be included in the record of the proceeding and be considered as part of the Commission's review.

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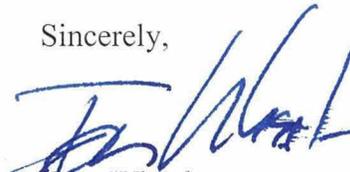
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