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1ST DISTRICT, ARIZONA



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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

June 14, 2010

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The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554-0005

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Dear Chairman Genachowski,

I write today to request that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) consider the needs of my constituents in Gila and Pinal Counties, as the FCC continues the adjudication process regarding WT Docket No. 09-104.

Both Gila and Pinal Counties contain some of Arizona's most sparsely populated areas. Ensuring access to both fixed and mobile telecommunications has been and continues to be a challenge. Both counties have been hit hard by the recession and must contend with critical public safety issues on a daily basis. In 2002, thousands of acres in Gila County were destroyed in the massive Rodeo-Chediski Fire. With reliable fixed and mobile telecommunications networks in place, fire departments, police officers and area residents would be in a better position to prevent and fight the devastating effects of these annual wild fires.

In addition to wild fires, public safety officers in Pinal County must contend with a high volume of drug trafficking and drug trafficking related crime that has led the Office of National Drug Control Policy to designate the county as a High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA). Seamless communication is essential to effectively ending the production, manufacture, transportation, and distribution of illegal drugs. Without the necessary telecommunications infrastructure in place, Pinal County will continue to encounter difficulties in fighting the serious drug trafficking problems that also harmfully impact other communities in the Southwest.

These growing economic development and public safety issues make ensuring reliable access to telecommunications networks even more urgent. Over the past year, I have worked with the FCC, NTIA and RUS to bring to these areas the telecommunications services Americans in urban and suburban areas have been able to access for years.

AT&T is ready to deploy \$400 million worth of equipment that will improve telecommunications access in Gila and Pinal Counties. Unfortunately, AT&T's expansion of infrastructure to benefit Gila and Pinal cannot begin until the FCC has submitted a decision regarding Alltel's presence in Arizona. It is my understanding that the FCC is close to issuing this decision and I simply wanted to illustrate the challenges my constituents continue to face while this situation remains unresolved and AT&T is unable to install and activate deployable infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Ann Kirkpatrick
Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress