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United States Senate

November 25, 2003

The Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

Thank you for your letter of invitation to the Commission's December 1, 2003 forum addressing Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). I will be unable to attend, but wish to express my strong support for your efforts to establish a national framework that will buoy VoIP growth and other innovations free of unnecessary or unreasonable regulatory costs or burdens.

Over the last weeks, I have been working diligently to convince many of my colleagues of the importance of fostering the Internet at the national level in the context of the debate surrounding a permanent Internet Tax moratorium. Governments in Asia, and just to our North in Canada, have achieved far greater broadband penetration numbers at a faster pace than the United States through national incentive programs. Not only do we risk forfeiting job growth, but we risk losing important IT jobs to foreign markets if we do not act accordingly. Even more is at stake as Internet growth is critical to productivity, education and homeland security.

It is the research and development, investment and resulting innovation in the IT sector that is crucial to local economies and towns in need of job growth and new opportunities. Further delay will only result in benefits forever lost. In part, this is why I was so pleased to see you quickly move forward to allocate additional spectrum for unlicensed devices in the 5 GHz band. VoIP is another example of new technologies that can be harnessed for the national good if the proper policies are set in place.

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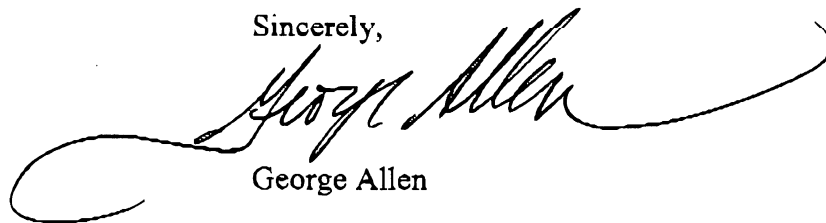
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As you move forward with a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking following the VoIP forum, I urge you to stay the course, as I know you will, in setting policies that encourage entrepreneurship and investment. I thank you for your leadership in shaping, and moving quickly to implement, a national landscape well fertilized for Internet growth at the FCC. I look forward to a continued partnership in the important months ahead.

I wish to note that I do not send this letter to support any party to this matter. Please treat this letter in conformance with all applicable procedural rules and ethical guidelines.

With warm regards, I remain

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George Allen". The signature is written in black ink and features a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the name.

George Allen