



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON
October 6, 2009

The Honorable Pedro R. Pierluisi
U.S. House of Representatives
1216 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pierluisi:

Thank you for your letter reiterating the concerns of your colleague, Congressman José E. Serrano, and your predecessor, Governor Luis G. Fortuño, concerning the adoption of a universal service support mechanism for insular areas and the availability of basic telephone and Internet service in Puerto Rico.

As you know, Section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, requires the Commission to ensure that consumers living in all regions of the nation, including those in rural, insular, and high-cost areas, have access to similar telecommunications services at rates that are reasonably comparable to rates paid by urban customers. In addition, the Recovery Act instructs the Commission to develop a national broadband plan by February 2010 that includes as one of its objectives, ensuring broadband access for all people of the United States. As the Commission develops the national broadband plan, we must keep in mind that some insular areas of the nation still require the infrastructure necessary for basic telephone service, which must be addressed in order to provide these areas with the benefits of broadband technology, as well.

As you note in your letter, the Commission committed to the adoption and release of a final Order by April 16, 2010, that addresses the insular support questions raised in the universal service proceeding. It made that commitment with the concurrence of the Puerto Rico Telephone Company (PRTC), on March 6, 2009, in its response to PRTC's request for a writ of mandamus from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. On April 8, 2009, the D.C. Circuit issued an Order holding the writ of mandamus in abeyance. The Commission staff is working diligently to prepare an Order for the Commission's consideration as soon as possible.

I appreciate your interest in this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julius Genachowski".

Julius Genachowski
Chairman