

MIKE JOHANNIS  
NEBRASKA

404 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
(202) 224-4224  
(202) 228-0436 FAX

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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COMMITTEES:  
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The Honorable Julius Genachowski  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

Thank you for your work on the National Broadband Plan (the Plan). I continue to review its contents with interest and appreciate its ambitious scope and commitment to detailed analysis. From just a few lines of statute included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, your team shouldered the responsibility of faithfully reviewing the many challenges broadband build out faces in the United States.

Affordable access to both communications and broadband services for rural residents is very important to my state, and I appreciate your attention to the challenge of broadband access in rural parts of the country. I am excited by the economic possibilities that broadband could make available to my constituents, both those who reside in rural settings and those who live in larger cities and towns. As you may know, I was intimately involved in maximizing the use of information technology and enhanced communications services in Nebraska as Governor and throughout rural America as Secretary of the Department of Agriculture.

Portions of the Plan, however, have generated significant concern in Nebraska. In particular, some find alarming the decision to pursue two strikingly different broadband download speeds for different demographics. I share their concern. As you know, the plan suggests that the download goal in rural settings should be 4 megabits-per-second (Mbps), while 100 Mbps would be an appropriate goal for non-rural settings. I worry that these dramatically different standards threaten to institutionalize what some have called the "digital divide," consigning rural customers to dramatically slower speeds for years to come.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to working with you to make certain that broadband works for Nebraska.

Senator Mike Johannis

LINCOLN OFFICE  
294 FEDERAL BUILDING  
100 CENTENNIAL MALL NORTH  
LINCOLN, NE 68508  
(402) 476-1400  
FAX: (402) 476-0605

OMAHA OFFICE  
9900 NICHOLAS STREET  
SUITE 825  
OMAHA, NE 68114  
(402) 733-9981  
FAX: (402) 733-9165

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KEARNEY OFFICE  
4111 FOURTH AVENUE  
SUITE 26  
KEARNEY, NE 68845  
(308) 236-7602  
FAX: (308) 236-7473

SCOTTSSBLUFF OFFICE  
115 RAILWAY STREET  
SUITE C102  
SCOTTSSBLUFF, NE 69361  
(308) 632-6032  
FAX: (308) 632-6295