

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2402

February 9, 2011

WFB
Wireless
Broadband
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Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

I am writing to join my Senate colleagues who have previously urged the Federal Communications Commission to move forward with a rulemaking on the data roaming obligations of commercial wireless providers. This issue has remained unresolved for some time, and I believe that prompt attention by the FCC would be a constructive step.

The FCC previously addressed the issue of roaming obligations for providers of voice services, and the August 2007 decision has been beneficial to consumers in my home state of Mississippi and the entire nation. This prior rulemaking has resulted in more consistent and reliable wireless voice communication throughout the country. Rural residents have been able to travel to other states and regions without experiencing interruptions in their wireless voice services.

However, it is now important that the FCC implement policies which would guarantee the same reliable roaming coverage with regard to data services. Americans currently use voice and data services interchangeably, and citizens may experience critical interruptions in business and personal communications when data roaming is unavailable. It is my view that unnecessary communication hurdles should be alleviated for wireless customers, and a data roaming policy which is compatible with voice roaming standards is a common sense approach which would ensure great benefits for wireless customers.

While this issue is of particular importance to wireless customers who live in rural areas in portions of Mississippi and other states, the whole country would profit from an updated approach that provides for the negotiation of automatic roaming agreements for data, in addition to voice services. I hope that the Commission will give prompt attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



THAD COCHRAN
United States Senator

cc: Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker

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