

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 26, 2012

Honorable Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

*WCB
rate
9/13*

Dear Secretary Dortch:

We write to respectfully request that the Tonasket School District's (TSD) application petitioning the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reconsider a recent decision forcing them to pay back \$40,000 in approved grant funds be reconsidered.

TSD provides education to children in Okanogan County in North-Central Washington state. TSD's mission, which has been enhanced by the FCC E-rate program, includes an emphasis on improving technology literacy. However, TSD has been placed in a precarious situation relating to its participating in the FCC E-rate program.

In 2005, TSD applied for and received funding from the E-rate program, administered by the Schools and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Administration Company (USAC). This funding was used for a voicemail system which was installed in the school system as part of a specific funding stream for "internal communications."

TSD received funding through the E-rate program until 2009 when the FCC issued a "Red Light" letter. The "Red Light" letter stated that TSD's application should not have been originally accepted and required TSD to pay back the approximately \$40,000 it had received since 2005. TSD then petitioned for reconsideration. This petition was denied by the FCC in a letter dated February 24, 2012.

We have been assured that TSD attempted to comply with all of the program regulations and were forthright when working with the USAC reviewers. TSD has raised concerns that USAC changed the interpretation of the type of service to be provided and then made the decision to make the policy retroactive, placing an enormous financial burden upon the school district.

We respectfully request that TSD's petition be reevaluated and the accompanying decision rationale to be shared with our offices.

Sincerely,


Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers


Rep. Doc Hastings