



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

May 20, 2014

The Honorable Rubén Hinojosa  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2262 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hinojosa:

Thank you for your letter regarding modernization of the Commission's rules governing the Schools and Libraries universal service support mechanism – also known as the E-rate program. I wholeheartedly agree with your views on the importance of the E-rate program to school districts with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, such as those you reference in south Texas.

Modernization of the E-rate program is among the most important tasks currently facing the Commission. I am a strong advocate for and believe in the E-rate program and the need to modernize its operation to emphasize high-speed broadband, as demonstrated in the two speeches on the topic I've attached to this letter for your convenience. It is critical to America's future to ensure that our schools and libraries have affordable access to modern high-capacity broadband technologies, particularly, as you point out in your letter, school districts with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students. In order to help provide our students with a 21st century education, it is essential that we re-prioritize the current program resources to focus on high-speed broadband connectivity both *to* schools and libraries and *within* schools and libraries.

Commission staff is reviewing the record that has been developed in response to the July 2013 *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, such as the views espoused by the South Texas Association of Schools, and meeting with stakeholders to ensure that we have robust input from all interested parties. Earlier this spring, the staff released a Public Notice seeking focused comment on a handful of specific issues that have been raised by commenters. In addition, the Commission held an E-rate Modernization Workshop on May 6, 2014, where Commission and E-rate stakeholders discussed the challenge of delivering high-speed connectivity to and within schools and libraries, highlighted successful strategies, and shared insights on these important issues.

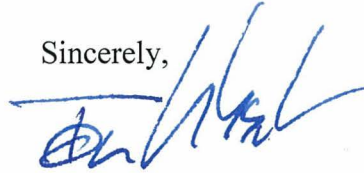
My goal is for the Commission to adopt an Order that would implement fundamental structural and administrative changes. We need to ensure that the E-rate program supports the high-capacity broadband needed to give our students access to 21st century educational opportunities, while simultaneously improving the efficiency and administration of the program and establishing explicit program goals and measurements.

Page 2—The Honorable Rubén Hinojosa

I can assure you that as we proceed with reform of this important program, we will take the views of all stakeholders into account, including those espoused by your constituents. We also will include your letter in the record of the proceeding for Commission consideration.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Wheeler", with a horizontal line above the first part of the signature.

Tom Wheeler

Enclosures



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

May 20, 2014

The Honorable Filemon Vela  
U.S. House of Representatives  
437 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Vela:

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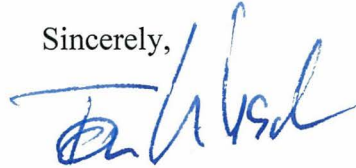
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Tom Wheeler

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