

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 2, 2014

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The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
450 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

As the Federal Communications Commission explores ways to modernize the E-rate Program, we write in support of maintaining web hosting as a Priority One service within the program, which continues to provide substantial benefits to students, parents and school faculty across the country.

School based websites, supported by web hosting services have become dynamic hubs where schools perform critical educational functions. These websites have become the medium school districts utilize for wide spread community engagement, emergency communication, digital learning and parental involvement.

Just as broadband access has provided the infrastructure required to support digital learning, web hosting plays a critical role enabling schools to truly connect to an online educational experience, providing around the clock access to digital learning. Perhaps more than any other service, web hosting helps to further stimulate broadband adoption and deliver a greater educational return on broadband investments. In fact, in a recent survey of more than 200 K – 12 school district administrators, 100 percent indicated that web hosting should remain funded as a Priority One Service within the E-rate program.

Although web hosting nationally only accounts for 1% of total E-rate Program funds, it delivers an impact far beyond actual costs. At just pennies per student per week, web hosting is one of the most cost-effective and highest-impact services funded by E-rate. Due to the very limited nature of school budgets, the elimination of web hosting as a Priority One service within the E-rate Program would create significant financial hardships for school districts because they will need to find additional resources to pay for their non-discounted share of broadband services.

For these many reasons, we believe any effort to alter the way that web hosting is currently treated within the E-rate Program would undermine the intended goals of the program and the FCC's long term broadband goals. Therefore, we respectfully request that moving forward you continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that web hosting remains a Priority One service. We look forward to your timely reply.

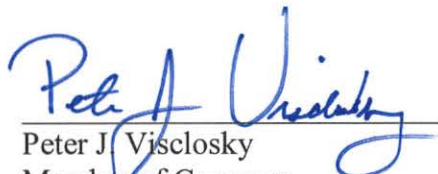
Sincerely,



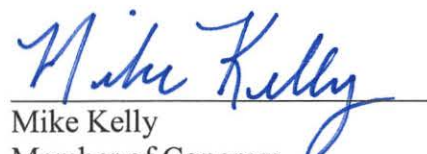
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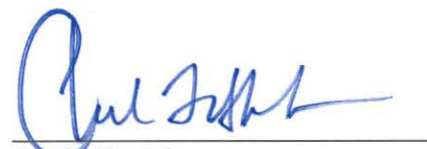

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