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**United States Senator**  
239 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**James Risch**  
**United States Senator**  
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**Mike Simpson**  
**Member of Congress**  
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Washington, D.C. 20515

**Raúl Labrador**  
**Member of Congress**  
1523 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 10, 2014

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The Honorable Tom Wheeler  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20536

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

Broadband Internet access has become an essential part of the Idaho economic and social fabrics in our state and rural communities, as a tool to build businesses, apply for jobs, and enhance educational opportunities. With robust broadband service, even a small Idaho town can rely on its residents' talent and determination to compete with the world. Without it, the same community risks being left behind in today's technology-centric economy.

Phase II of the Connect America Fund ("CAF II") offers a tremendous opportunity to bring speedier, fiber-fed broadband connections to Idaho rural communities that would not otherwise have this important communication resource. Thanks to the Commission's well-publicized efforts, many Idaho rural communities are now counting on CAF II. CAF II represents the final phase of Universal Service reform, therefore, its rules will effectively determine whether or not our rural residents will have a broadband connection or not.

We are writing today to emphasize how important it is to ensure that the final details allow CAF II to live up to its promise. We are concerned that if the Commission more than doubles the speed requirements (from 4 Mbps to 10 Mbps) without allowing the appropriate level of flexibility in other elements of CAF II, the program's overall mission could be endangered. A number of constructive ideas that could help achieve the speedier network goals without exceeding the CAF II annual budget could include extending the term of support up to ten years and providing flexibility on the build-out parameters. We request that you seriously consider these ideas, along with other constructive feedback you receive from interested stakeholders.

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Now that we are in the final phase, the Idaho delegation hopes the CAF II standards can ensure that those unserved Idaho customers are reached, while also requiring competitive carriers to meet a reasonable standard of verification before depriving a community of CAF II support.

Thank you for considering our concerns, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Mike Crapo  
United States Senator



Jim Risch  
United States Senator



Mike Simpson  
Member of Congress



Raúl Labrador  
Member of Congress