



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

October 24, 2014

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cantwell:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of certain aspects of Phase II of the Connect America Fund (CAF II). In your letter, you express concerns that the overall mission of the CAF II program could be endangered if the Commission increases the current broadband speed benchmark for program recipients to 10 Mbps downstream /1 Mbps upstream without allowing flexibility in other elements of program, particularly with respect to the length of the term of support. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

The universal service program is one of the most important tools at our disposal to ensure that consumers and businesses in rural America have the same opportunities as their urban and suburban counterparts to be active participants in the United States of the 21st century. We are focused on updating the universal service high-cost program to ensure that we are delivering the best possible voice and broadband experiences to rural areas of states such as Washington, within the confines of our Connect America budget, all while providing increased certainty and predictability for all carriers, and a climate for increased broadband expansion.

In April of this year, the Commission adopted a *Connect America Fund Phase II Report and Order* to move forward with Phase II of the Connect America Fund for price-cap carriers. In addition, in an associated *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM)*, the Commission sought comment on a number of the issues you raise, including revising the current broadband performance obligations to require minimum speeds of 10 Mbps downstream, and applying the same performance obligations to all recipients of Phase II support and rate-of-return carriers. The *FNPRM* also seeks comment on proposals to allow CAF II recipients more flexibility in meeting their performance obligations, including whether to extend the term of support for CAF II recipients, and permit recipients to substitute locations in partially served census blocks for locations in the unserved census block for which they receive support. We have received a robust record on these issues, and they are under consideration by Commission staff.

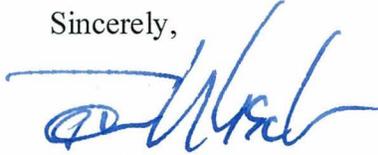
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of 178,335 challenges from parties on the served/unserved status of census blocks. Commission staff is currently reviewing these challenges and seeking public comment on the challenges. We intend to make sure that a fair challenge process is conducted so that all eligible unserved areas qualify for funding.

I welcome a dialogue with stakeholders as to how best to accomplish our shared objectives. I look forward to working with you as we continue reforming and modernizing the Universal Service Fund high-cost program – as well as other components of the Universal Service Fund – to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
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October 24, 2014

The Honorable Suzan DelBene
U.S. House of Representatives
318 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative DelBene:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of certain aspects of Phase II of the Connect America Fund (CAF II). In your letter, you express concerns that the overall mission of the CAF II program could be endangered if the Commission increases the current broadband speed benchmark for program recipients to 10 Mbps downstream /1 Mbps upstream without allowing flexibility in other elements of program, particularly with respect to the length of the term of support. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

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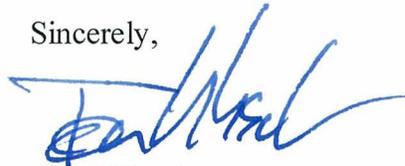
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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October 24, 2014

The Honorable Denny Heck
U.S. House of Representatives
425 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Heck:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of certain aspects of Phase II of the Connect America Fund (CAF II). In your letter, you express concerns that the overall mission of the CAF II program could be endangered if the Commission increases the current broadband speed benchmark for program recipients to 10 Mbps downstream /1 Mbps upstream without allowing flexibility in other elements of program, particularly with respect to the length of the term of support. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

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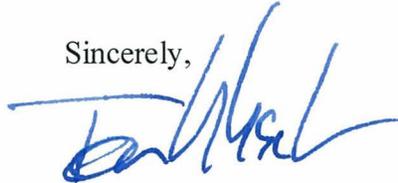
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Tom Wheeler



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October 24, 2014

The Honorable Derek Kilmer
U.S. House of Representatives
1429 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Kilmer:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of certain aspects of Phase II of the Connect America Fund (CAF II). In your letter, you express concerns that the overall mission of the CAF II program could be endangered if the Commission increases the current broadband speed benchmark for program recipients to 10 Mbps downstream /1 Mbps upstream without allowing flexibility in other elements of program, particularly with respect to the length of the term of support. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

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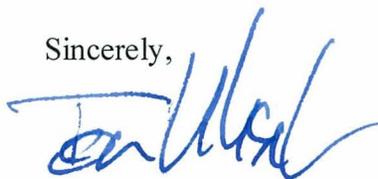
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Tom Wheeler



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October 24, 2014

The Honorable Rick Larsen
U.S. House of Representatives
2113 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Larsen:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of certain aspects of Phase II of the Connect America Fund (CAF II). In your letter, you express concerns that the overall mission of the CAF II program could be endangered if the Commission increases the current broadband speed benchmark for program recipients to 10 Mbps downstream /1 Mbps upstream without allowing flexibility in other elements of program, particularly with respect to the length of the term of support. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

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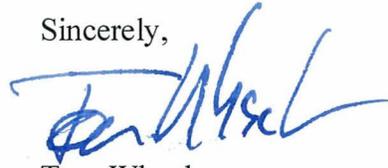
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Tom Wheeler



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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October 24, 2014

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
173 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

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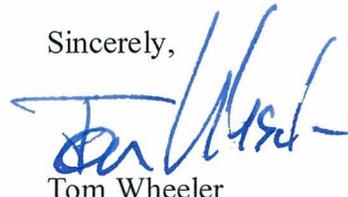
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Tom Wheeler



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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

October 24, 2014

The Honorable Adam Smith
U.S. House of Representatives
2264 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Smith:

Thank you for your letter regarding the implementation of certain aspects of Phase II of the Connect America Fund (CAF II). In your letter, you express concerns that the overall mission of the CAF II program could be endangered if the Commission increases the current broadband speed benchmark for program recipients to 10 Mbps downstream /1 Mbps upstream without allowing flexibility in other elements of program, particularly with respect to the length of the term of support. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

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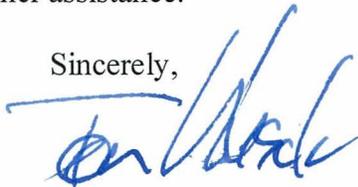
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