



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

October 24, 2014

The Honorable Sean Duffy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1208 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Duffy:

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 may fall short 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, and suggest several proposals to provide such flexibility. 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 within the confines of our Connect America budget, while providing increased certainty and predictability for all carriers and a climate for increased broadband expansion.

In April, 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 to rate-of-return carriers. In addition, the *FNPRM* seeks comment on the approaches that you raise in your letter – including lengthening the term of support, using the new speed standard to determine whether an area is served, and allowing CAF II recipients to substitute locations in partially served census blocks for locations in the unserved census block for which it received support. As you suggest, these proposals would allow CAF II recipients more flexibility in meeting their performance obligations. We must consider these proposals in the contexts of our other policy goals, such as encouraging competition and private investment, to ensure that we are fulfilling our universal service mandate.

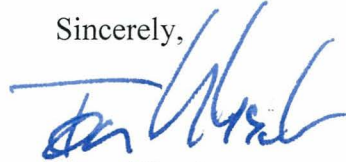
We have a robust record on these topics and the Commission's staff is giving these issues all due consideration. I welcome a dialogue with stakeholders as to how best to accomplish our

Page 2—The Honorable Sean Duffy

shared objectives, and 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 Fund – to ensure that all Americans have access to robust voice and broadband services.

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 stylized flourish extending from the end.

Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

October 24, 2014

The Honorable Reid Ribble  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1513 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Ribble:

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 may fall short 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, and suggest several proposals to provide such flexibility. 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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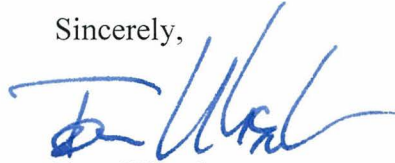
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Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF  
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

October 24, 2014

The Honorable Mark Pocan  
U.S. House of Representatives  
313 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Pocan:

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 may fall short 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, and suggest several proposals to provide such flexibility. 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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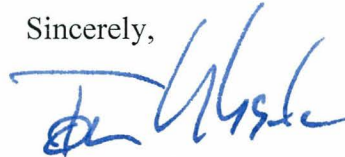
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OFFICE OF  
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

October 24, 2014

The Honorable Tom Petri  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2462 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Petri:

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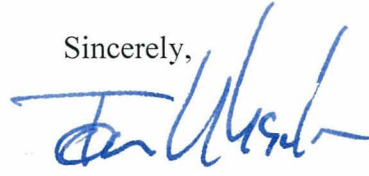
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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October 24, 2014

The Honorable Ron Kind  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1502 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Kind:

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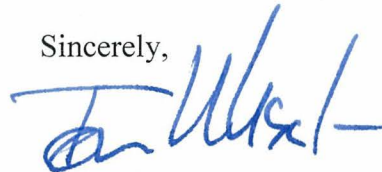
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