

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 24, 2014

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

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Dear Chairman Wheeler:

As Members of the Senate who represent rural states, we write to emphasize the importance of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) final rules for Phase II of the Mobility Fund (MF II). It is critically important to our rural constituents that MF II will ensure they have the same access to advanced wireless services as their urban counterparts.

In 2011, the FCC undertook a monumental transition of the Universal Service program. We applaud the Commission for this effort. However, because MF II represents the final phase of universal service reform to support advanced mobile services for years to come, it is important the FCC heed the advice of local communities and stakeholders. The FCC's rules for MF II must fulfill the Commission's mandate to provide advanced telecommunications services in all regions of the country, and ensure rural areas have services comparable to urban areas.

The FCC's June 10th Order and further notice of proposed rulemaking contemplates a number of changes – the details of which will likely determine the success of MF II. The health of the rural economy rests, in large part, on advanced mobile infrastructure that can provide high speed data and voice coverage in homes, towns, and on our rural roads. Ubiquitous, advanced mobile services remain a challenge, and considerable gaps persist in many rural areas. The rules for MF II and the resources made available for this program must meet this challenge so that rural families and businesses can benefit from the wireless revolution in agriculture and education, as well as in healthcare and emergency response.

Rural households and businesses stand to benefit from MF II if it is implemented correctly. We strongly urge the Commission to reconcile its rules for MF II with the practical challenges of building and maintaining advanced wireless services in rural areas in a competitively neutral manner. It is imperative to close the wireless divide between rural and urban America, and the FCC must seize MF II as an opportunity to do so.



Roy Blunt
United States Senator

Sincerely,



Roger Wicker
United States Senator

Jerry Moran

Jerry Moran
United States Senator

Kelly A. Ayotte

Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator

Deb Fischer

Deb Fischer
United States Senator