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FCC Mail Room

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

December 5, 2014

1290

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

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

As you know, the media marketplace continues to evolve in new and exciting ways. Internet speeds and access continue to grow, and consumers have more cable channels and online media options. However, access to these opportunities remains a challenge for many – particularly the most rural Americans not yet reached by the fastest broadband and seniors who continue to access video content solely through television.

In addition to technological challenges, consumers' do not always have the ability to access locally-important rural television content. While we understand there are business reasons for programmers to focus on urban and suburban demographics, rural-focused channels providing rural news, community-focused event coverage, and family programming have a demonstrated record of success. In addition, such channels fill a need in rural communities which is frequently unfilled by more urban competitors, such as television coverage of agricultural news important to farmers and ranchers.

For this reason, we respectfully request you and the Commission remain mindful of the challenges faced by rural Americans as you consider issues before the Commission. We remain committed to working with you to ensure all Americans have the opportunity to access the content most relevant to their work, families, and communities.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Colin C. Allen

Bill Shuster

John W. Bishop Jr.

Cheri Busta

Jeff Fortenberry

Mac Gandy

Cynthia M. Lummi

Mark V. Amico

Rita Rogun

Bob Boy

Jason Smith

Jeri Sewell

Red Dill

Sam Lachack

Richard Miller

Tim Huelskamp

Ch Stewart

Martha Roby

Paul A. Gosar

Steve Dine

Robert B. Adair