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United States Senate

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FCC Mail Room

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

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

I write today to express my concern about the potential harmful impacts for those living in rural areas and on tribal lands across the country if the Commission implements the proposed reforms adopted in its December Order concerning high-cost loop support (FCC 14-190).

Over the last few years, I have worked with and been supportive of the FCC's mission to bring broadband to all Americans. Broadband access is essential to participate in the digital economy. Broadband access and adoption can help overcome geographic isolation and bring economic opportunity not only to urban families but also to rural and tribal families as well. As you know, too many of our rural and tribal families, however, do not have access to this transformational technology. This digital divide makes the benefits of broadband: economic expansion, better access to healthcare, and more effective educational opportunities elusive for too many of those living in rural and tribal communities.

I am concerned that the Commission's proposals for high-cost loop support could delay broadband expansion in rural areas of Kansas and on tribal lands across the country, where investment in fixed high speed Internet service is hindered by the cost of deploying and maintaining the network. In Kansas alone, the high-cost loop support reforms adopted in December of last year are predicted to negatively impact nearly 75 percent of rural Kansas providers, and would result in a net loss of millions of dollars per year to those serving the most rural areas of my state. This reduction will slow efforts to expand Internet access and upgrade broadband speeds across the state and on tribal lands.

I urge you to carefully consider the impact of this change on rural and Native American communities in Kansas and across the country. I further urge you to consult with tribal governments as called for in a resolution recently adopted by the National Congress of American Indians. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jerry Moran

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