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FCC Mail Room

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October 17, 2017

Chairman Ajit Pai
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael O'Rielly
Commissioner Brendan Carr
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket 10-90

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Dear Mr. Chairman and Commissioners:

We understand that the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") is close to adopting final rules to auction nearly \$2 billion in federal universal service support to bring broadband access to unserved areas in rural America.

We write to support the FCC's efforts as high-speed, reliable broadband is becoming increasingly essential to the survival of our rural communities in Michigan. While urban areas in our state have access to broadband, too many rural areas in Michigan, particularly in Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula, are sparsely populated and difficult to serve. In some areas, electric cooperatives are answering the call of their communities and are deploying fiber and delivering broadband. But, even for the electric cooperatives, some areas are too expensive to serve without support.

The FCC's Connect America Fund Phase II Auction presents a unique opportunity to close digital divides and revitalize our rural communities, attract businesses, improve service to schools and health care clinics, and allow our constituents to work from home today and in the future. To do so, however, our communities need reliable, high speed broadband. We hear from our constituents that certain services, such as wireless and satellite, are not reliable or have insufficient speed and capacity to respond to demand.

In adopting the final parameters of the Auction, we therefore urge the FCC to ensure that providers willing to serve an area with 1 Gbps and 100 Mbps broadband service, have a real chance to do so. To this end, we encourage the FCC to adopt sufficient upfront reviews and safeguards to ensure that only those capable of truly delivering this service to all interested consumers in these areas are able to participate in the auction. Absent such protections, we are concerned that the Connect America Fund Phase II Auction may not fulfill its potential of connecting these unserved communities.

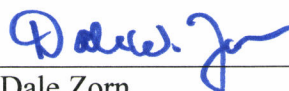
Thank you for your leadership in advancing universal service in Michigan and across our nation. We look forward to working together so that rural Michiganders can soon benefit from these efforts.

Sincerely,

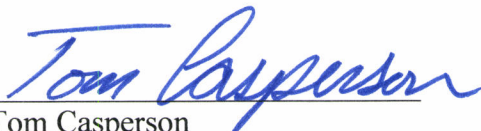
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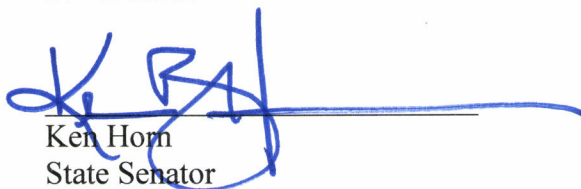
Wayne Schmidt
State Senator
37th District



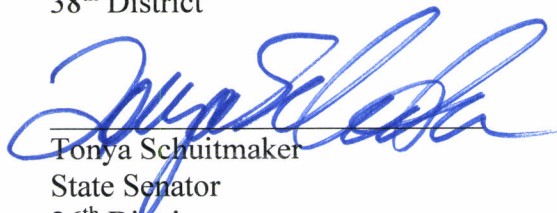
Dale Zorn
State Senator
17th District



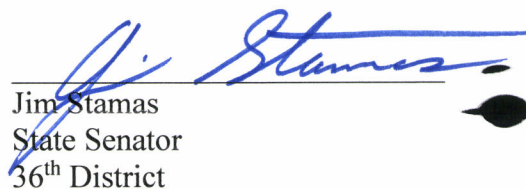
Tom Casperson
State Senator
38th District



Ken Horn
State Senator
32nd District



Tonya Schuitmaker
State Senator
26th District



Jim Stamas
State Senator
36th District



Darwin Booher
State Senator
35th District