

CC 96-48

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 25, 1997

RECEIVED

MAY 1 1997

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

The Honorable Reed Hundt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Room 814
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt,

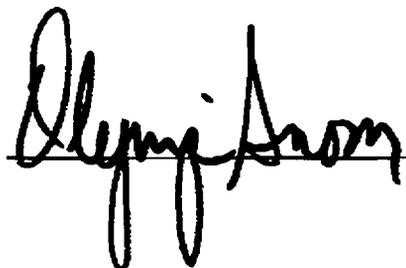
We write you to express our continued interest in the successful implementation of the Snowe-Rockefeller-Exon-Kerrey (SREK) amendment to the Telecommunications Act of 1996. As members of the bipartisan Senate Education Technology Working Group, we believe that this is one of the most important provisions of the new law. Prior to the Joint Board's recommendations, our group sent several letters urging recommendations that would provide schools and libraries with deep discounts and link classrooms to the Information Superhighway as quickly as possible, so our students will be prepared for the 21st Century. If properly implemented, this amendment could revolutionize American education and help assure that America's students and teachers succeed in the information age.

Not too long ago, many schools in America received the most limited telecommunications services at some of the highest rates. Our vision was to give children, in even the lowest income or most remote communities, a chance to use information technologies to learn and prepare for their role in the coming century. We also sought to give every American access to the information superhighway through community libraries. The knowledge of the ages, the collections of great museums, and the ideas of innovative thinkers can be within reach of every school and library in our nation.

As you work to implement the SREK amendment as part of the Telecommunications Act's larger effort to assure that all citizens receive quality telecommunications services at affordable rates, we restate our strong support for this provision. We want this provision to be successful and believe that financing for the SREK amendment, and the law's universal service provisions, should be broadly based.

We have heard from teachers, students, and parents in support of the SREK amendment. We write to you again, to emphasize the importance of assuring that America's classrooms and libraries are full participants in the information revolution.

Sincerely,




The Honorable Reed Hundt
April 25, 1997
page 2

[Handwritten signature]
John F. Kerry

John H. Chafee

[Handwritten signature]
Paul H. Douglas

[Handwritten signature]
Tom Kaschle

Dendall Ford

[Handwritten signature]
John Jeffords

Chuck Robb

[Handwritten signature]
Rick Santorum

Edward M. Kennedy

Byron Z. Morgan

[Handwritten signature]
J. Bill

CC 96-45

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 25, 1997

RECEIVED

MAY 1 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of General Counsel

The Honorable Reed Hundt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Room 814
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt,

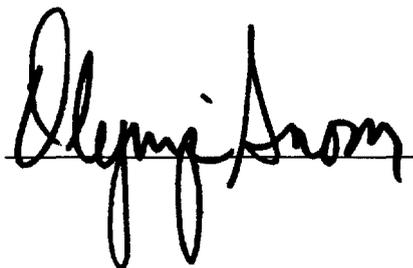
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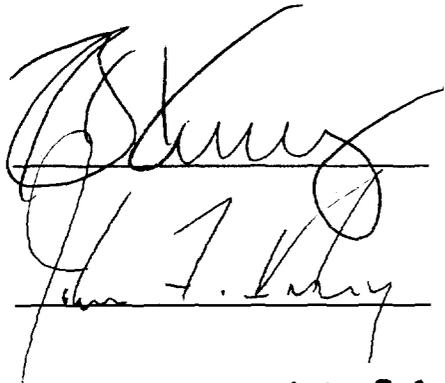
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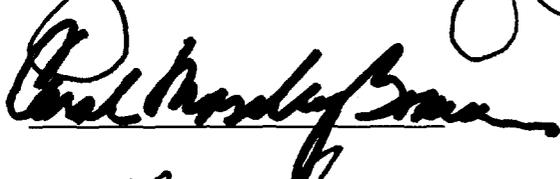
Sincerely,

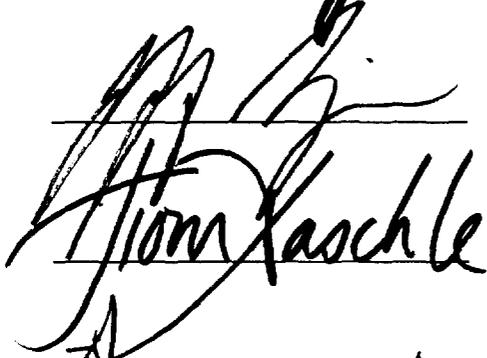


The Honorable Reed Hundt
April 25, 1997
page 2

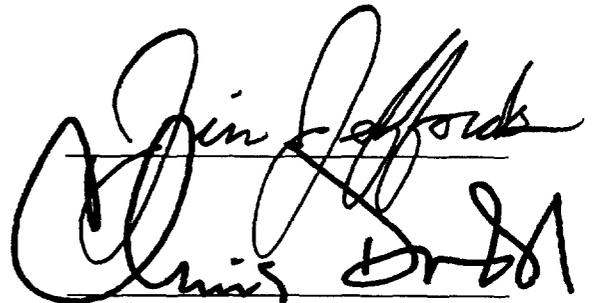


John H. Chafee





Dendall Ford



Chuck Robb



Edward M. Kennedy

Byron Z. Morgan



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

**** FAX COVER SHEET ****

CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS

Office of Congressman Xavier Becerra
1119 LONGWORTH HOB
Washington, DC 20515-0530
(202) 225-2410 FAX (202) 225-2202

DATE: 4-25-97

TO: Commissioner Rachelle B. Chong
FCC

Number: 418-2820

FROM: CONGRESSMAN XAVIER BECERRA, CHAIRMAN
 ESTHER AGUILERA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 DEBRA DIXON, COUNSEL
 MARY GONZALES, LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

PAGE(S) 6 (including fax cover sheet)

NOTE:

CC 96-45

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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MAY 1 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

April 24, 1997

The Honorable Reed E. Hundt, Chairman
Federal Communication Commission
1919 M Street, N.W. - Room 814
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt:

We are writing to express the strong support of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for universal service funding to connect schools and libraries to the information highway.

The children of our nation are our most precious resource and their educational development is critical to our national security. Unfortunately, children in under-resourced communities and in rural areas are on the verge of being shut out from access to the information highway, the gateway to their development.

Studies show that by the year 2000, 60 percent of all jobs will require the ability to use a computer. The training to prepare our children for these jobs, however, is not universally available. While 62 percent of schools serving students from relatively higher income families provide access to the Internet at school, only 31 percent of schools serving a large proportion of students from poor families provide similar access. In our Latino communities, the disparity is even greater. Eighty-two percent of high school students from the most affluent homes have access to computers at home while only 14 percent of poorer high school students have computers at home.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) must take affirmative steps to ensure that small schools, rural schools, schools in the poorest areas of our country and schools with large minority populations have access to the information highway and technology-based learning. A study conducted by the Thomas Rivera Center of Latinos and Information Technology found that schools are the primary gateway to technology for Latino and African-American children.

When Congress passed the Telecommunications Act in 1996, it recognized this critical problem and mandated a universal service policy. The Act requires the FCC to provide discounts to schools, libraries and rural health centers for access to telecommunication services. On November 7, 1996, the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, established by the Act, made recommendations to implement universal service. These recommendations will be voted on by May 8, 1997, by the FCC for final approval, which include:

- 1) Establishing a discounted rate, from 20-90%, to connect schools and libraries to telecommunications services. Eligible services would include Internet access, internal connections, installation and maintenance;
- 2) Creating a Universal Service fund of \$2.25 billion a year to connect schools and libraries. The funding will be derived from fees paid by telecommunication service providers.

The Honorable Reed E. Hundt, Chairman
April 24, 1997
Page 2

We have a common goal: to ensure that children in rural and under-resourced areas of our country have every tool and every opportunity to learn and to contribute to America's future. We are proud to support full funding to link all our classrooms, schools, and libraries. Also, please see our attached letter commenting on the Caucus' concerns about closing the gaps in access found in our communities and connecting schools and libraries.

We will be happy to discuss this vital issue of importance to our children and to our communities with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Xavier Becerra, Chairman
Congressional Hispanic Caucus



Lucille Roybal-Allard, Chair
CHC Economic & Infrastructure
Task Force

Enclosures

cc: Commissioner James H. Quello
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W. - Room 802
Washington, DC 20554

Commissioner Rachelle B. Chong
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W. - Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W. - Room 832
Washington, DC 20554

Senator John McCain, Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation

Senator Conrad Burns, Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications

Representative Thomas J. Bliley, Chairman
Committee on Commerce

Representative W.J. Tauzin, Chairman
Subcommittee on Telecommunications, Trade and Consumer Protection

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 23, 1996

Mr. Reed E. Hundt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. Street, Rooms 814
Washington, D.C. 20555

Re: FCC Docket No. 96-45, Further Comment

Dear Chairman Hundt:

As Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), we are writing to reiterate our strong interest in the swift and full implementation of the Universal Access provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the law that overhauls the rules governing the telecommunications industry. Following are our comments on the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service recommended rules (CC-Docket No. 96-45 Further Comment).

As we discussed at our July 25th meeting, we are interested in meeting with the Federal-State Joint Board regarding the implementation of the Universal Access policies. Unfortunately, because of the congressional schedule, we were unable to arrange a meeting prior to adjournment. We take this opportunity to detail some concerns we believe may be addressed with full and proper implementation of the Universal Access provisions of the Telecommunications Act. The Act directs the Federal-State Joint Board to develop Universal Access rules to ensure residential access and guarantee affordable telecommunications rates to connect all schools and libraries. Pursuant to Section 254(h), the Federal-State Joint Board will be submitting its recommendations on Universal Access to the FCC this November. We hope you and the Joint Board will be able to brief us early next year on the development of Universal Access rules and how our concerns are being addressed. Outlined below are three important priorities.

Our first priority is to provide all of America's children with the educational technology they need to succeed. According to the Department of Education study, *Getting America's Students Ready for the 21st Century: Meeting the Technology Literacy Challenge* (June 1996), lack of access to powerful technology "places our children at a competitive disadvantage in the new, international marketplace of jobs, commerce and trade." This study also indicates that schools in low-income areas are less likely to have access to the Internet. Moreover, the situation is particularly grim for schools with significant Hispanic enrollment. While the national average is one computer for every 12 students, schools with 50% or more Hispanic students average one computer for every 17 students, according the U.S. Department of Education. In addition, computer ownership for Hispanic households in 1995 was only about 11%, compared with nearly 27% for non-Hispanic households.

Chairman Reed Hundt
FCC Docket No. 96-45
Page 2

We concur with the recommendations of Secretary Riley, Department of Education, to provide a free "E-Rate" for basic telecommunications services for our schools and libraries and a separate "E-Rate" that allows for discounted rates for advanced services. To provide choice and flexibility to schools and libraries, the educational discounts for core and "special services" must cover the widest range of services. In order to further the intent of Congress to ensure affordable access to schools and libraries, this definition should include all commercially available telecommunications and information services. We believe the legislative history is clear: deploying technology into all American classrooms is a national priority.

Second, we must address the technology challenge by ensuring that all communities have access to high quality telecommunications services. We are concerned that Hispanic and other urban and rural low-income communities do not have the infrastructure they need to access advanced technology and be meaningful participants in the information age. Historically, the FCC has recognized the need to make communications services available in every neighborhood by aggressively promoting opportunities for low-income underserved communities. The principle of universal service has always been a part of the delivery of communications services as a means to develop basic communications networks in low-income and rural communities. The Telecommunications Act authorizes the FCC to develop a funding mechanism for the purpose of making advanced technology accessible to low-income and underserved communities.

Future economic growth and opportunity in Hispanic and other underserved communities is dependent on keeping pace with the development of advanced technology. In crafting universal service rules, among the primary FCC roles should be to examine gaps in access and means by which to close those gaps. For instance, basic telephone service continues to be a problem for Hispanic populations. According to FCC figures, Hispanic households have low penetration rates: only 85% of Hispanic households report having service, compared with nearly 95% of non-Hispanics. The importance of this Congressional mandate to ensure appropriate infrastructure access for all communities to advanced technology cannot be overstated. Every effort must be made by the FCC to identify the telecommunications infrastructure and resource gaps in order to allow for equitable economic development opportunities. This effort must include an adequately funded mechanism to meet our goals.

Third, we must seize this opportunity to work together to help ensure that no child or community is left behind. To comply with this commitment, we must be prepared to establish goals for incorporating all schools and low-income communities. Since we know that many of our low-income neighborhoods, schools and libraries lack adequate resources and infrastructure to support advanced telecommunications, we must be able to track which entities have achieved adequate access and which have not. We urge you to develop mechanisms for monitoring and reporting the progress of Section 254 of the Telecommunications Act in allowing access for hard to reach communities. Monitoring and reporting are critical to ensure that the universal service plan adequately responds to the access needs of all communities.

Chairman Reed Hundt
FCC Docket No. 96-45
Page 3

The Universal Access provisions of the Telecommunications Act renews our commitment to offer all segments of U.S. society the opportunity to advance toward the 21st century. Please keep us informed about the development of the universal service plan for ensuring community access and connecting schools and libraries. We look forward to working with you as you proceed to implement the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Sincerely,

Ed Pastor

Bob Meyer

Robert D. ...

Lucille Reybal-Blard

Frank Tejeda

Henry B. Gonzalez

Solomon P. Ortiz

José E. Suarez

Bill Richardson

Luis V. Gutierrez

James ...

C C 96-45

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MAY 1 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

April 28, 1997

Reed E. Hundt
Chair
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554-0001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the physician groups listed below, which represent over 300,000 individual physicians from across the country, we are writing to urge you to support the full implementation of the "universal service" provisions of the "Telecommunications Act of 1996." As you know, the universal service provisions of the Act mandate the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to direct telecommunications rate subsidies to, among other groups, "rural health care providers." The law explicitly states that the FCC must make telecommunications rates for eligible health care providers and physicians comparable to telecommunications rates for similar services in both urban and rural areas. We strongly encourage you to immediately implement the so-called Snowe, Rockefeller, Exxon, Kerrey provisions of the Act because we believe it to be important to the growth of telemedicine and would allow for greater access to health care services in rural and underserved areas.

The Act specifically mandates that telecommunications carriers provide telecommunications services to health care providers serving patients in rural areas at rates comparable to rates in urban areas. In addition, the FCC's own Advisory Committee on Telecommunications and Health Care has stated that the "discounted rate is critical to the success of rural telemedicine, and the comparable urban rate should eliminate differences in urban and rural rates created by distance." As Congress intended, we believe the definition of "rate" should be construed broadly.

Many dedicated physicians and health care professionals provide essential medical services in small private offices, often in remote and isolated areas across the country. In order to be able to continue to provide quality health care services, individuals practicing in rural areas must often pay excessively high long-distance charges just to be able to access Internet and other telecommunications services. The ability to access these and many other services at affordable rate would allow physicians and health care providers to deliver the best health services possible.

2

We urge you to support the "universal access" provisions of the Act because we believe that these provisions are fair and would improve the quality of health services in many needed areas of the United States.

Sincerely,

American College of Radiology

American Medical Association

cc: James H. Quello, Rachelle B. Chong, Susan Ness, Regina M. Keeney

FAX COVER SHEET

American Medical Association
Physicians dedicated to the health of America



AMA Division of Legislative Counsel
1101 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20005
Reply Fax Number (202) 789-7401

Date: 4-28-97

To: *Rachelle B. Chong*

From: Curtis Rooney

Division of Legislative Counsel

Phone number: (202) 789-7423

Message:

CC 96-45



Lake County

Lake County Courthouse
106 Fourth Avenue East
Polson, Montana 59860-2187
Phone (406) 883-7262
Fax (406) 883-7283

Joyce Decker Wegner, Superintendent of Schools

"The Future Lies In the Minds of Tomorrow"

April 23, 1997

RECEIVED

MAY 1 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of SecretaryThe Honorable Rachelle B. Chong, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Chong:

I am the Lake County Superintendent of Schools over eight district schools in Montana serving as liaison office between the districts and the State Office of Public Instruction. Three of the districts have small isolated two-room schools without administrators so I directly supervise those schools. I wish to thank you for your dedication in ensuring that all school districts and education consortia will have affordable access to the Information Superhighway. Being on the electronic highway is vital for us in Montana with the vast geographic distances our districts cover and the barriers between them. Lake County has four different telephone companies operating with long distance charges between all of them. One of my isolated districts has two two-room schools twenty miles apart with long distance charges between each of them and between my office. This district, like two others, tries to provide quality education with a total operating budget of less than \$100,000. It is essential for all of us to provide the best education possible in the most efficient manner. Connectivity to each other and our local libraries via Internet e-mail and home pages will greatly assist this collaborative effort so that better education in the classroom can be improved.

The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board decision will guarantee that all school districts will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of all our schools, and importantly, the plan will bring services directly to the classroom where students learn. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts with an ability for connectivity between our cooperating districts and the small public libraries that serve them is essential if we hope to prepare our students for the workforce of tomorrow. More essential is that we prepare them to be people able to communicate with each other and the continuously shrinking world around us. We want our Montana students to be from THE LAST BEST PLACE in connection with the world. If we can get connectivity, including opportunities for distance learning and distance staff development, we will be active learners on the electronic superhighway.

Our students need deep discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools. Thank you for your work towards these goals.

Sincerely,

Joyce Decker Wegner
County Superintendent of Schools

AUTOMATIC COVER SHEET

DATE : APR-23-97 WED 2:57 PM

TO :

FAX # : 912024182820

FROM : LAKE COUNTY COURT HOUSE

FAX # : 1 406 883 7283

2 PAGES WERE SENT

(INCLUDING THIS COVER PAGE)

1830 Nogales Street
P.O. Box 8490
Rowland Heights
CA 91748

(818) 965-2541
(Fax) 854-8302

Office of the Superintendent



Governing Board

Jerre Davenport
Peter H. Lamphere
Mary Jo Maxwell
Paul E. Walters
Melody Yu

Dr. Ronald J. Leon,
Superintendent

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Date: 4/22/97

Time: 3:45 pm

To: The Honorable Rachelle B. Chong Company: FCC
Commissioner (Calif) Rm 844

From: Dr. Ronald J. Leon Total number of pages, including this sheet: 2
Rowland Unified School District

Comments:

CC 96-45

1830 Nogales Street
P.O. Box 8490
Rowland Heights
CA 91748

(818) 965-2541
(Fax) 854-8302



Governing Board

Jerre Davenport
Peter H. Lamphere
Mary Jo Maxwell
Paul E. Walters
Melody Yu

Dr. Ronald J. Leon
Superintendent

Office of the Superintendent

April 22, 1997

MAY 1 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

The Honorable Rachele B. Chong, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Honorable Chong:

On behalf of the Rowland Unified School District, in Los Angeles County, California, I urge you to support the proposed "e-rate" for our schools.

Affordable access to the Information Superhighway is one important educational tool needed to prepare California students for the job market of the next century.

The Telecommunications Act and the Federal-State Joint Board decision will guarantee that all school districts will have the opportunity to connect to the Internet and provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will bring technology/telecommunication access into the classroom. Your inclusion of internal classroom connections for discounts is vital.

Rowland Unified is committed to bringing the world into our classrooms and extending student learning experiences beyond the confines of the school. Deep discounts for telecommunication services will enable this effort to move forward in 1997 and future years.

I urge the FCC to fully support the Joint Board's discount plan for universal service for schools, and thank you for your support of our future citizens.

Sincerely,

Ronald J. Leon, Ed.D.

RJL:ac

c: Board of Education

Mission: To inspire and educate individuals to realize their dreams and fulfill their responsibilities to society. We proudly join the parents and community in preparing each generation to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

STATE OF MARYLAND

C C 96-45

COMMISSIONERS

H. RUSSELL FRISBY, JR.
CHAIRMAN

CLAUDE M. LIGON
E. MASON HENDRICKSON
SUSANNE BROGAN
GERALD L. THORPE



BRYAN G. MOORHOUSE
GENERAL COUNSEL
DANIEL P. GAHAGAN
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
GREGORY V. CARMEAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER TOWER
6 ST. PAUL STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202-6806
(410) 767-8000
FAX NUMBER (410) 333-6495

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

April 22, 1997

The Honorable Reed E. Hundt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt:

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate some concerns regarding the high cost assistance fund proposals which the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") currently is considering. The Joint Board's Recommended Decision proposed a universal service plan with three components. One component is the high cost program to transfer funds to eligible communications carriers serving high cost areas. Variations on this proposal have been and continue to be proposed by different parties. It is my contention that no proposal which would increase the size of the high cost fund should be adopted, and furthermore that none of the proposed "proxy models" are sufficiently developed so as to permit their use at this time.

Under almost every option presented to date, Maryland is a net contributor to the high cost fund. Under some proposals, Maryland ratepayers' monthly bills would increase by up to approximately \$2.00 per month. Maryland ratepayers do not have the excess financial resources necessary to subsidize telecommunication providers in other states. It is patently unfair that rates for Maryland subscribers should be forced to rise in an effort to keep rates low in other areas of the country. At a minimum, we would be forced to assert that such costs should be allocated on a company-wide and not state-specific basis, or on some other more equitable basis.

The Honorable Reed E. Hundt
Page 2
April 22, 1997

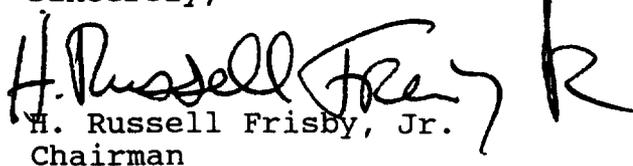
I am very concerned that some specific elements of the proposals being considered will have the effect of unduly burdening users of telecommunications services in Maryland. The Maryland Public Service Commission has labored extensively over the past several years to foster competition in Maryland. If the federal high cost fund is not structured appropriately, the subsidy collected will have the effect of distorting the telecommunications marketplace and ultimately will hamper robust competition.

For these reasons, the proposed high cost fund should be narrowly designed to direct support to truly high cost areas. The FCC's focus should be on providing a predictable, explicit, and competitively neutral way of funding the high cost fund at existing levels rather than changing the size of the fund. It is essential to have a high cost assistance program of the correct scope in order to ensure that consumers are not overburdened in funding the new program.

I strongly urge the FCC to avoid expanding the high cost fund beyond its current scope. I further urge the FCC not to go forward with a final decision on the size and scope of the high cost fund at this point. Instead, I strongly support the proposal that the Joint Board be reconvened and that the issue be referred to it. This would permit all concerned to further consider the proxy models and other plans which have been proposed with the hope of reaching some accommodation.

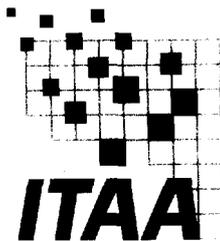
Finally, please be advised that these opinions represent those of the author and not necessarily those of the Maryland Public Service Commission.

Sincerely,


H. Russell Frisby, Jr.
Chairman

cc: Commissioner James H. Quello
Commissioner Susan Ness
Commissioner Rachelle B. Chong

HRF:SSM:lsm



CC 96-45

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MAY 1 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

April 18, 1997

The Honorable Rachelle B. Chong
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Participation of Non-Carrier ISPs in the Schools and Libraries Program

Dear Commissioner Chong:

The Commission will soon release its Universal Service Order. One of the most significant aspects of this decision will be the creation of a program to assist schools and libraries in obtaining access to the Internet. The Information Technology Association of America supports the Commission's efforts to ensure that school children have access to the vast information resources available over the Internet. We are concerned, however, by reports that the Commission is considering excluding non-carrier Internet Service Providers ("ISPs") from participation in this important program. Any effort to do so would violate the terms of the Telecommunications Act, deprive schools of the ability to choose the service that best meets their needs, and impair competition in the information services market.

The Commission should not be swayed by arguments, advanced by a number of carriers, that allowing non-carrier ISPs to participate in the schools and libraries program would violate the statutory requirement that the program be "competitively neutral". Under the Joint Board's proposal, both carriers and non-carrier ISPs would be required to contribute to the universal service fund if they generated revenue from providing telecommunications services. At the same time, neither carriers nor non-carrier ISPs would be required to make universal service payments based on revenues derived from the provision of information services or other non-telecommunications products. There is simply nothing impermissible about a program in which all entities contribute to the universal service fund based on revenues derived from the provision of telecommunications services, no entity contributes to the universal service fund based on revenues derived from non-telecommunications offerings, and all entities have an equal opportunity to obtain subsidies to provide non-telecommunications offerings.

The only way that the Commission could violate the competitive neutrality requirement would be to exclude non-carrier ISPs from participating in the proposed schools and libraries program. Such an approach effectively would provide one class of participants in the highly competitive

Information Technology Association of America

information services market – telecommunications carriers – with the exclusive right to provide Internet services to schools and libraries. The inequity would be compounded if ISPs that are affiliated with a carrier, but which do not themselves provide telecommunications services, are allowed to participate in the program.

Excluding non-carrier ISPs from the proposed program also would have an adverse effect on eligible institutions. Such an approach would limit the ability of schools and libraries to obtain services from the entities that they determine to be the best, most cost-effective providers. These institutions also would be deprived of the lower prices that would result from competitive bidding, thereby limiting the total level of services that they could obtain within the \$2.25 billion “cap” proposed by the Joint Board.

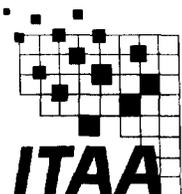
Finally preventing non-carrier ISPs from participating in the schools and libraries program would effectively foreclose competition in a significant segment of the information services market. This, in turn, could adversely affect competition in the over-all market for information services.

For these reasons, ITAA urges the Commission to implement the Joint Board’s Recommendation to allow carriers and non-carrier ISPs to participate equally in the schools and libraries program.

Sincerely,



Harris N. Miller
President



0096-45

RACHEL A. MAZE

7016 East 77th Place

Tulsa, OK 74133-7848

April 17, 1997

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MAY 1 1997

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Chairman Reed Hundt
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt,

Let me begin by applauding your efforts to network every classroom and library in the United States to the information superhighway by the year 2000. Obviously you share my vision that telecommunications is playing and will continue to play a vital role in the education of our youth in the next century and beyond.

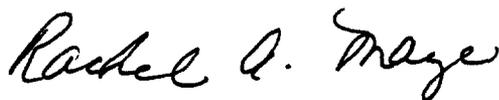
Please know that your dream is already becoming a reality right here in Tulsa. Last year, for example, I chaired a citizens' committee which developed a Bond Issue to create funds for, among other things, telecommunications technologies for all classrooms in Tulsa Public Schools (Oklahoma's largest school district). Specifically, \$25 million of the total \$94.5 million bond issue was earmarked for technology, including computers and the wiring of schools. As the attached article notes, the issue passed overwhelmingly in Tulsa.

As you well know, however, the purchase of computers and wiring of schools is just the start of being connected to the Internet and education-based technology services. Access also requires local and long-distance telephone service to become a reality. More importantly, it requires *affordable* service or access can remain an obstacle for our students.

Today, you and your fellow Commissioners are reviewing an application from Southwestern Bell to provide long-distance services to Oklahomans – an application that I believe, if approved, will lower long-distance rates for consumers, including those in the education sector. How? Through the increased competition Southwestern Bell's entry will create in the market.

As you review this issue, please consider the great advantage educators will receive should Southwestern Bell's application be approved. By granting approval, you'll be one step closer to realizing your dream of bringing advanced telecommunications to our students.

Sincerely,



CC: Commissioner James Quello
Commissioner Susan Ness
~~Commissioner Rachete Chong~~

News
Media

REPORT

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Voters OK Tulsa School Bonds

By Ginnie Netherton
World Staff Writer

A large voter turnout lifted four school bond issues totaling \$94.5 million to victory Tuesday.

Superintendent John Thompson said, "This third time is the charm."

Voters had rejected two similar school bond issues in the last two years. The bonds needed 60 percent of the vote to be approved.

Unofficial results show:

■ A \$54.5 million proposal for building renovation passed, 40,070 to 18,699 — 68 percent approval.

■ A \$10 million proposal for libraries passed, 39,502 to 19,119 — 67 percent approval.

■ A \$25 million proposal for classroom materials and equipment passed, 38,902 to 19,552 — 66 percent approval.

■ A \$5 million proposal for buses passed, 37,314 to 21,130 — 64 percent approval.

The turnout was unofficially put at about 58,700 voters.

Bond issue supporters were all smiles and cheers in the lobby of the Embassy Suites Hotel, 3332 S. 69th East Ave., as the election results were announced and tallied on a large blackboard.

The "Vote Yes" party had more than 200 guests, including parents, teachers, principals, students, city councilors, school board members, custodians and bus drivers.

Thompson told the crowd: "We are ready to work. We won't start tomorrow; we will start tonight. As your superintendent, I pledge to you to give you our best. Two times I've been here before. This third time is the charm. We're entering a new era in Tulsa Public Schools, and as we begin this

■ Tuesday's Results

■ Tulsa Schools

165 of 165 precincts reporting

BOND NO.	Description	Yes	No
BOND NO. 1	\$54.5 million for buildings	40,070	18,699
BOND NO. 2	\$10 million for library additions and materials	39,502	19,119
BOND NO. 3	\$25 million for classroom equipment and materials	38,902	19,552
BOND NO. 4	\$5 million for buses	37,314	21,130

■ Area elections, A-12

new renaissance, we are grateful for the effort of the community."

Mayor Susan Savage led the cheers as she watched the returns tallied throughout the evening.

"I want you to really understand what you've done," she told the supporters. "The elected officials here tonight can tell you that 60 percent is pretty elusive. We have stood up in an overwhelming way in not just a majority, but a supermajority, and said, 'Yes, we care about the future of our city, and we care about our children.'"

Sheree Jordan, a leader of the opposition to the bond issue, said: "Our signs have been stolen and defaced. We have continually See Yes on A-3

News Media REPORT

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...Yes

Continued from A-1

been portrayed as being against children. We are for children and want tax money in the classrooms for quality education, not wasted by district management."

She said she believed voters felt pressed to approve the bond issues.

"They weren't given permission to vote no," she said.

At the watch party, community dignitaries including city councilors and school board members shared the stage with Thompson and Savage. Thompson asked all Tulsa Public Schools students present to stand in front of the stage.

School board President Clyde Moore said, "This issue is an investment in our children. Children will look back at this day, Oct. 8, 1996, and say we made a difference in the world."

Assistant Superintendent Jim Spear said the money from the sale of the bonds should be avail-

able in March. He said school principals would meet this week with architects and computer technology experts to make final plans for each school.

Rachel Maze, who led the citizens committee that identified the projects to be funded, was nearly in tears as she hugged people at the watch party.

"I am so happy and not surprised," she said. "Tulsa came through for our kids. Thank goodness!"

Last fall's defeated school bond issue drew about 35,000 voters. A 1994 school bond proposal, on the same ballot as a city bond issue, drew about 46,000 voters.

Supporters of Tuesday's bond issue included city, county and state officials, the Metropolitan Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, and organizations such as Leadership Tulsa and the Greater Tulsa Association of Realtors.

Priscilla Harris, the office manager of Citizens for Tulsa, the umbrella group for the campaign,

said the key was informing the public and getting people to vote.

The campaign raised about \$160,000 privately, which helped pay for signs, buttons, direct mail and advertising. Television advertising cost \$140,000.

Public funds cannot be used to promote a school bond issue.

Maze said the total was at least twice as much as was raised to promote the 1995 proposal.

Harris said speakers made more than 110 presentations about the bond issue to community organizations since August.

During the day Tuesday, parents and students stood at about 40 major intersections, waving signs in support of the bond issue.

Harris said one parent held a sign despite having a sprained ankle. She said many made their own signs and fliers to hand out.

The single biggest project to be funded with money from the bond issue is a new \$8 million Kendall-Whittier Elementary School, to be built near Fourth Street and

Columbia Avenue.

All 77 schools in the district will receive repairs and renovations, including \$5.6 million to update wiring.

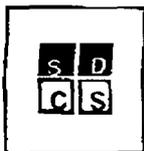
Also planned are \$2.4 million in textbooks and \$9.6 million in computers and related technology.

Some schools would receive permanent classrooms, replacing the need to teach students in trailers and prefabricated structures.

Another highlight is completion of an eastside football stadium. Its second phase, totaling \$1.3 million, will be completed with money from the bond issue. It will be the home stadium for Hale and East Central high schools.

Sixteen schools that lack libraries will get them, for \$2.5 million. The bond issue also includes \$1.5 million for library books.

The district will buy about 150 buses to replace those whose mileages average 140,000 to 150,000.



SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS

LEGISLATIVE OFFICES	• 1130 K Street, Suite 205, Sacramento, CA 95814 •	(916) 444-7242
	• 4100 Normal Street, San Diego, CA 92103-2682 •	(619) 293-8331

BERTHA O. PENDLETON
Superintendent

PAGE K. O'CONNOR
Legislative Programs Director

(619) 297-4942 FAX

Please deliver this FAX to:

NAME Commissioner Rachelle B. Chong

ORGANIZATION

PHONE NUMBER 202-418-2200

FAX NUMBER 202-418-2820

From:

Rebecca F. Phillpott (Becky)
Legislative Assistant

Number of pages including this cover page 2

Message: