

May 1, 1997

James Quello, Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M St. NW, Room 802  
Washington, D.C. 20054

MAY 6 10 15 AM '97

JAMES H. QUOLLO

Dear Commissioner Quello:

I write in support of meaningful discounts on telecommunications services for schools and libraries so that every school child and life-long learner can have access to the world of information technology. The Telecommunications Act - through its Universal Service Fund provisions - mandates the development of special discount rates for all schools and libraries so that they can secure services at affordable prices.

There is no doubt that advanced telecommunications services are important to improving learning, sparking the imagination and leveling the playing field for all our nation's people. Affordable access to technology in all classrooms and libraries will assure that our children and life-learners can connect with the technology they would need to compete in today's and tomorrow's workforce. Advanced telecommunications services in the classroom will also create informed and skilled consumers of new technology well into the 21st century. As of now our school system is unable to afford Internet capabilities to extend access to each classroom. Our local telephone company has been reluctant to give our schools reduced rates. We would like for our students to have the same opportunities that are afforded to students in more affluent areas. Without the passage of the Telecommunications Act, there is very little hope that we will ever be able to provide this opportunity.

Last November, the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service sent to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) a set of recommendations for implementing the Universal Service Fund provisions related to the schools and libraries. These recommendations would give our learning institutions significant discounts on all services that are commercially available, with deeper discounts for those schools and libraries least able to pay and more expensive to service. All schools would get discounts on connections to classrooms and Internet connectivity, both of which are essential to providing the most advanced learning opportunities to the greatest number of students.

I urge your support for the Joint Board's recommendations. Taken as a whole, they will provide affordable discounts for a full range of services needed to meet each community's diverse needs. Most importantly, these provisions, if adopted by the FCC, will make advanced technology for learning available to all Americans.

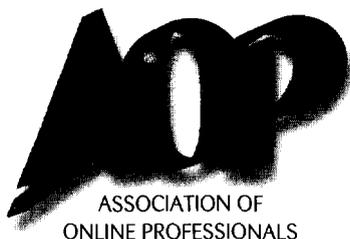
Sincerely,

*Salvina Ban*

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SUNSHINE PERIOD

MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

May 5, 1997

Reed Hundt  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street N.W.  
Washington DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt:

I am writing in my capacity as Chairman of the Association of Online Professionals, the primary professional association for the online industry, to ask that the Commission defer adoption of the proposed plan for Universal Service with respect to Internet services on May 8.

While recognizing the mandate given the Commission by the Congress, we strongly believe that the proposed plan for universal service would have the following unintended consequences:

- **A chilling effect on the online industry.** Internet services, many of whom are not yet profitable, will be hit with untold millions of dollars in new costs that cannot be passed along to consumers. Since these companies require a large number of business telephone lines but make no outbound calls, online services will not benefit from any reduction in long distance access charges. Even a \$1-per-month fee will, in the case of small providers, be sufficient to make these services unprofitable.
- **A penalty on consumers who adopt new technologies.** By exempting single-line residences and businesses, the proposal would penalize consumers who wish to add telephone lines to make use of fax, satellite, modem and other telecommunications services.
- **Favoring one technology over another.** If telephone based technologies are subject to this fee, but cable modem and wireless technologies are not, the Commission will establish a precedent for selection of which competitors will survive.

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Alexandria, Virginia 22310  
703-924-5800 Phone  
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OFFICE OF  
COMMISSIONER  
SUSAN NESS

The Federal Communications Commission has an admirable record of service to the online industry, and we recognize that as the industry matures we will need to shoulder some obligations as corporate and industry citizens. One such obligation will be the development of appropriate mechanisms for universal service.

But the present proposal raises serious issues that we believe will require better data, further discussion and wider industry input to resolve. And it is our belief that the goals of the Congress and the Commission can be better met if we, as an industry, are able to put forth our best ideas and resources.

For us to do this will require additional rounds of comment and deliberation. I would be delighted to meet with you at your convenience, or to place at the disposal of the Commission the resources of our association, in this effort.

In the interim, I would ask that you not adopt the current proposal for universal service, or that you specifically defer any provision of the proposal that would establish exemptions, rates or protocols.

Sincerely,

Dennis C. Hayes,  
Chairman

Cc: Commissioner James Quello  
Commissioner Susan Ness  
Commissioner Rachelle Chong

96-45



# Breckinridge Memorial

1011 Old Highway 60  
Hardinsburg, KY 40143-9732  
Phone: (502) 756-2124  
Fax: (502) 756-6042

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Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

DATE OF: May 6, 1997

SUNSHINE PERIOD

MEMO TO: Commissioner Susan Ness  
Federal Communications Commission  
Contact: Janice Wise

SUNSHINE PERIOD

SUBJECT: Upcoming vote on Telecommunications Regulations  
affecting Telemedicine

It is my understanding that the Federal Communications Commission is preparing to vote Wednesday, May 7, on a telecommunications policy that will have significant impact on Rural Health providers. The Wednesday vote will be on "Universal Service" policy, part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

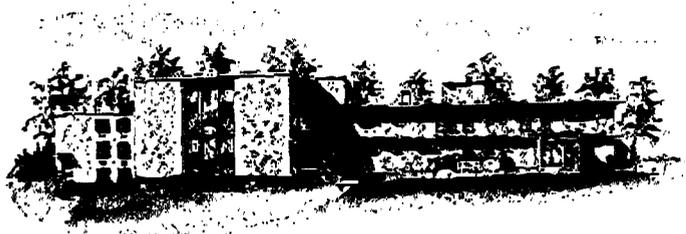
The Universal Service regulations will allow rural providers to receive the same rates for telecommunications lines used in telemedicine that urban providers receive. With the current and anticipated growth in this segment of the health care business, this can be a significant cost saving for the provider and ultimately the consumer. Also, universal service will allow eligible rural providers to connect to the Internet without paying long distance charges in the event a local Internet Service provider is not available.

I wish to convey our organizations strong support for and request your vote in favor of Universal Service regulations.

George E. Walz, CHE  
Chief Executive Officer

GEW/jdm

96-45



**Hardy Wilson** *MEMORIAL HOSPITAL*  
OF  
COPIAH COUNTY  
HAZLEHURST, MISSISSIPPI 39083-0889

May 6, 1997

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MAY - 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

The Honorable Susan Ness  
Federal Communications Commission  
FAX: 202 418-2821  
Attention: Janice Wise

Dear Commissioner Ness:

It is our understanding that the Federal Communications Commission is scheduled to vote this week to adopt regulations governing "universal service" policies as part of the implementation of the Telecommunication Act of 1996.

The universal service policies of the Act mandate that the FCC direct telecommunication rate subsidies to schools, libraries and rural health providers. In the case of health care, the FCC must make telecommunication rates for eligible health care providers comparable to telecommunications rates for similar services in urban areas.

The goal of this provision is to lessen the difference between the quality of health care services available in urban areas and those in rural areas, many of which suffer from a lack of health care resources and access to medical professionals, as well as the burden of being at greater distances from advance medical technology and treatment facilities.

We feel that "telehealth" has the potential to help our hospital improve the quality and lessen the cost of health care delivery in rural areas. That is why we hope to help keep the telecommunications cost for our facility as low as possible by adopting the following policy positions related to universal service provisions:

- \* Universal service should support distance charges.
- \* Universal service should support toll-free connections to the Internet.

Thank you for your immediate consideration and support on this issue. If I can provide additional information, or be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

L. Pat Moreland  
Administrator

LPM/bjw

96-45

**From:** Fabral-Mark Robinson <fabinfo@fabral.com>  
**To:** A7.A7(SNESS)  
**Date:** 5/6/97 3:27pm  
**Subject:** Universal Service Plan

SUNSHINE PERIOD

I encourage you to NOT adopt the proposal for the Universal Service Plan ("modem tax"). In Pennsylvania the schools are spending large sums of money on technology which in many cases is providing laptops for teachers to take home. The local healthcare organizations are flush with excess cash. Lavish libraries have been built in several local communities with many tax dollars. In light of these observations I do not see the need to commit even more of my money to support these insitutions. If taxes on telephone lines are a necessary avenue then please consider taxing ALL telephone lines starting with the first one. The result will be a much lower tax but on more lines.

Thank you.

Mark Robinson  
1235 Middletown Rd.  
Hummelstown, PA 17036

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MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

**From:** rmmh <rmmh@brightok.net>  
**To:** A7.A7(JQUELLO)  
**Date:** May 6, 1997 11:23am  
**Subject:** (no subject)

Commissioner Jim Quello  
Commissioner Rachelle Chong  
Commissioner Susan Ness

I am writing to encourage you to vote for telecommunications rate subsidies for schools, libraries and rural health care providers. As Administrator for a rural acute care hospital, rural health clinic, home health agency and emergency ambulance services in Roger Mills County, Oklahoma, I urge you to give rural health care providers access to telecommunications services at about the same overall cost as urban health care providers. The additional cost of distance charges for rural facilities causes an additional financial burden for these providers. Without these subsidies many cannot afford these services. I also ask you to vote for rate subsidies for schools and libraries. Our communities desire and deserve access to telecommunications services for their growth and prosperity. Thank you in advance for your help and consideration on this matter. Marilyn Bryan, Administrator, Roger Mills Memorial Hospital.

**CC:** A7.A7(RCHONG)

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Federal Communications Commission  
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**From:** Carol Ormay <cormay@kyha.com>  
**To:** A7.A7(SNESS,RCHONG)  
**Date:** May 6, 1997 2:00pm

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Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

KHA - An Association of Kentucky Hospitals and Health Systems supports universal service regulations as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. These regulations will give our rural facilities more cost effective access to telecommunications and enable them to provide better care to patients in their communities.

Carol Blevins Ormay  
Vice President/Membership Services  
KHA

96 45

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MAY 6 1997

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

**From:** <acsutherland@onix.com>  
**To:** A7.A7(RCHONG)  
**Date:** 5/5/97 7:27pm  
**Subject:** "Universal Service"

I would like to express my disapproval of the "universal service" proposal, specifically on the clause which would seem to be an outright "modem tax".

I also lodge this complaint supporting any requests by the AOP.

Andrew Sutherland  
acsutherland@onix.com

96-45