

As an individual that is planning a Wireless ISP to service rural markets I object to the notion that such businesses should be required to pay USF taxes. Our business, and others like it, are servicing markets that the local LECS have completely abandoned. I do not feel that the solution is to tax the Wireless Internet Services Providers (WISP's) providing services to these markets.

The USF funds were created with the intention of allowing communication services to be offered in rural areas where population densities make it difficult to provide economical service to residents. While the initial design of these funds were well intentioned, this practice has created somewhat of an annuity for the LECS servicing such markets. With existing infrastructures and little ambition to offer additional services beyond basic dial-tone; residents are locked into a technology time capsule. This happens while the LECs continue to receive tax funding for their investment

Entrepreneurial individuals, recognizing the needs of these markets, have been quick to utilize leading edge technologies to begin offering services that most likely would never be available to their customers. These wireless service providers are able to offer affordable products and services because of their size and freedom from regulations. The equipment to provide these services is definitely not inexpensive and it requires considerable talent to properly deploy these services. By placing additional burdens upon such small companies, many would be forced from the market and, once again, rural areas will be without access to essential technologies that are available in the larger cities.

Additional regulation upon this industry will force consolidation, reduce the competitive nature and ultimately lower the services levels and expansion that exists in the wireless services marketplace. Small private companies are doing an excellent job of providing services that the USF funds were designed to provide. Yet, these companies are competing with the large monopolistic USF funded LECs and providing the services that they claim are to "expensive" to offer. Further funding the LECs with USF funds from my company will only contribute to their ability to force myself and others from the marketplace. Allow the competitive forces of the marketplace to play out without governmental intervention. Please do not subsidize my competitors with my tax dollars.

Thank for your time,

Bob Hrbek  
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