

October 12, 2006

Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Copps:

Thank you for taking time to discuss the Ft. Wayne experience with broadband deployment during my August trip to Washington, DC.

I want to update you on two developments related to our conversation and comment on some questions you raised.

First, on September 21, Verizon announced that it will soon launch television service in Ft. Wayne over its fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) network, now passing all homes in the city (128,000 premises). Verizon's entry gives us real and significant wireline cable competition for the first time. I believe this will prove very beneficial to customers in terms of choices for services and cable pricing.

Second, because of our innovative efforts to use this FTTP infrastructure for new broadband applications, Ft. Wayne was recently chosen by *Killer App Magazine* as the site of the first annual "Killer App Conference," scheduled for April 30-May 2, 2007. We are excited at the prospect of serving as a showcase for next-generation applications. I hope it will be the first of many opportunities to demonstrate leadership in this area.

As I mentioned in our August meeting, some of my fellow mayors have questioned my efforts to attract and ease the entry process for a traditional telephone company into the video market, believing that a long-time monopolist would never really invest in a true advanced network. I think they're missing the obvious. The landscape of telecommunications has changed dramatically in the last few years. This provides a unique advantage for communities. Telephone companies and cable companies are now competing to capture the same customers for voice, data, and video services. To engage in that competition, telephone companies have to invest in new networks to increase their capacity. The cable companies have to respond, by dropping prices and improving data speeds. This is a virtuous cycle which will be very

beneficial to consumers and the local economy in terms of sheer network capacity and capabilities, services offered, and pricing. It is happening now in Fort Wayne.

But here's the important point for community leaders: companies invest where they get the fastest and highest return on their money. This is especially the case in today's competitive market. Many municipal leaders lose sight of that simple fact. If you're trying to get a company to build a new broadband network in your city, you have to realize they're going to go where they can quickly get a cable TV franchise, where they can expedite building permits, and where the city will be responsive, working with them to solve problems. New entrants have many investment opportunities. They will simply go around the communities that drag their heels or impose onerous requirements.

In short, I believe Tom Friedman got it right in *The World is Flat*. Communities which recognize the necessity of advanced broadband networks and find ways to get them deployed will benefit greatly. Communities which do not will suffer. Had Verizon not been willing to deploy FTTP in Ft. Wayne, I would have found another way to get big bandwidth to my city. My belief is that communities must "beg, borrow, buy or build" next-generation networks. Local leaders MUST find a way to get a fat pipe to their homes, businesses, and institutions. There is no other choice if you're going to compete in a flat world.

I believe our efforts are paying dividends. We are feeling a positive jobs effect. Not only did the Verizon FIOS build immediately bring new jobs to Ft. Wayne, the access to big bandwidth was a factor in Raytheon's decision to add 200 more jobs in Ft. Wayne earlier this year. We are laying the groundwork for the economy of the future in Ft. Wayne by beginning to test and develop new broadband applications. We are utilizing the bandwidth to improve the lives of Ft. Wayne residents. We have developed a series of "iTeams" to use our connectivity, and these teams are already finding great ways to help Ft. Wayne residents, such as IT tutoring of senior citizens to use the Web by tech-savvy high school students.

Because I felt the need to attract broadband investment, I supported legislation that passed the 2006 Indiana General Assembly which among other changes created a new statewide cable franchising law. I believe barriers to entry for broadband investment must be reduced.

Thank you again for taking time to discuss the Ft. Wayne experience during my recent trip to Washington. I look forward to continuing the discussion of how America's communities can attract and utilize advanced communications networks to compete and prosper.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Richard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Graham Richard  
Mayor of Ft. Wayne, Indiana