

My elderly parents live in Brookings, Oregon, definitely a rural community in Oregon. Their only means of communication is by cell phone, which at the present time, is hardly acceptable. Our conversations have dead zones and the connection is frequently broken. Sometimes we are not able to reconnect after it is broken. As you can imagine, this is very frustrating since they actually live out in the country and are elderly. I would love to see rural communities being given the same luxuries that we enjoy in the large metropolitan areas. We obviously take a solid connection for granted. There are times that my parents actually have to go outside of their home to get a connection in order to place a call. That's just plain crazy! What would happen in a true emergency? I can't imagine if something were to happen and they could not even get a connection to call 911. What then???

This should NOT be a luxury ... it should be a given!!

Please help improve the lives of rural Americans by protecting and expanding the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless providers. Wireless telecommunications is no longer a luxury in our society; it is a fundamental necessity for public health, safety and economic development.

Capping the fund will shut the door on rural America. Less USF support for rural wireless networks will leave us with poor coverage, dropped calls and dangerous dead zones. The urban/rural technology gap will only widen.

Rural America deserves the same cell phone service as our big cities. I urge you to expand – not cap – the USF. Please don't leave us behind.

Thank you.

Helen Parker