

Please help improve the lives of rural Americans by protecting and expanding the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless providers. Wireless telecommunications is very important for the health, safety, and economy of our society.

A few months ago, I was planning to meet up with some friends in Central Oregon for a weekend trip. I was travelling late in the evening on Friday night and ended up missing my turn-off and didn't realize it until I had gone another 50 miles down the road. I used my Blackberry to obtain information about an alternate route and headed out on that route. Unfortunately, that route ended up being through a rural part of central Oregon, a portion of which was actually a seasonal road and was actually closed (a fact I didn't discover until I reached a closed gate on the route...which was about the same time my fuel light came on). I was travelling by myself and became quite nervous that I would be stuck out in the middle of nowhere without gas and no way to summon help because my cell phone and blackberry did not have cell phone reception. Additionally, because I had taken a wrong turn, no one knew where to look for me.

As a young single female, I enjoy my independence, and my cell phone gives me security that if I get into trouble, help is only a phone call away. however, experiences like this one make me think twice about travelling alone and to unfamiliar places. It seems crazy to think that something as simple as cell phone service coverage might have the ability to so severely impinge on my independence and freedom. Please do what you can to allow wireless service to expand in rural Oregon and Washington.

Thank you!