

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.

Being a life long resident of rural Nebraska, I know the challenges rural Nebraska faces. Funding new wireless technologies, especially in areas where the population base is not enough to ever return the large investment is not an attractive situation for most wireless carriers.

I personally have been in numerous dead areas throughout Nebraska. Without the USF, these areas may never get covered. It is a challenge to keep young people in rural Nebraska. Not providing the basic tools it takes to build reliable day to day services will ensure that rural Nebraska continues to lose population and fall further into economic hardship.

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.