



October 29, 2008

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
c/o Natek, Inc., Inc.
236 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.
Suite 110
Washington, D.C. 20002

RE: WC Docket 03-109 and CC Docket 96-45

Dear Secretary Dortch,

SeniorNet, a national nonprofit organization that has been termed ‘the world’s leading nonprofit technology educator of older adults’ has been delivering on its mission of bringing computer access and education to adults 50+ since 1986. Throughout the United States we have over 130 SeniorNet Computer Learning Centers, with international affiliates. SeniorNet is committed to bridging the ‘Digital Divide.’ We believe that affordable broadband access for older Americans is a critical step in bringing them across the Digital Divide, and we offer the following comments in support of a petition presented by TracFone Wireless, Inc. to establish a trial Broadband Lifeline/Link-Up program in Florida, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Tennessee.

SeniorNet’s success demonstrates that older adults have much at stake in broadband access. It enables them to be more self-sufficient, keeps them connected to their friends, families and social networks, enables them to get important benefit and health information and greatly enhances the quality of life and independence for older Americans and Americans with disabilities. Additionally, with more and more seniors needing to return to work given the current state of the economy, seniors benefit from broadband by giving them more options to stay active in the labor force through telecommuting while in retirement.

At present, broadband services are cost-prohibitive for most older Americans and those living on a fixed income. As stated in the TracFone petition, according to the PEW Internet & American Life Project study entitled *Home Broadband Adoption 2008*, only twenty-five percent of households with annual incomes below \$20,000 have broadband service, as compared with fifty-five percent of all households. Current broadband pricing is not affordable; it is considered by many older adults to be a ‘luxury item,’ when in reality, it is an essential tool for important services and day-to-day living.

We believe this proposal is an important step in reaching older adults that cannot currently afford broadband access. Many of SeniorNet’s constituents are based in Florida, Virginia and Washington, D.C. and would benefit greatly from this program. The proposed trial program is an effective way to roll out this plan and to measure its success.

As technology continues to advance, it is our responsibility to ensure that older adults are not left behind. We applaud TracFone for taking this important step to provide affordable broadband access for underserved Americans and moving us closer to bridging the Digital Divide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristin Fabos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kristin" being more legible than the last name "Fabos".

Kristin Fabos
Executive Director
SeniorNet