



June 5, 2009

Acting Chairman Michael Copps
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 09-51

Dear FCC Acting Chairman and Commissioners:

Universal broadband deployment has become a goal repeatedly emphasized by policymakers. As a result of a provision in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the FCC has the opportunity to help America reach this objective through the development of a national broadband strategy. The Latino Coalition (TLC) urges the FCC to adopt a plan that will result in broadband connections in every home in the country.

TLC was created in 1995 by a group of Hispanic business owners from across the country to research and develop policies relevant to Latinos' overall economic, cultural and social development while empowering individuals through the promotion of self-reliance and personal responsibility. As its primary mission, TLC closely monitors public policy at the federal, state and local levels to determine its impact on the Latino communities throughout the U.S., and engage in public education campaigns when warranted. Since its creation, TLC has become one of the most effective national Latino groups addressing issues that directly impact Hispanic businesses and consumers through aggressive issue advocacy campaigns, legislative initiatives and endorsements.

Over the past few years, we have recognized the importance of broadband technology in the economic and personal success of the Latino community. Broadband enables Latinos to develop new business models, take classes online, and reduce their health care costs through telemedicine applications. Low-income and non-English speaking Latinos are missing out on these innovative opportunities, as they adopt broadband at lower rates than other Americans. The Pew Internet and American Life Project attributes these low adoption rates to a lack of digital literacy, a perceived lack of relevant content, and the fear of an overwhelming amount of information available online. The FCC must work to eradicate these barriers so more Latinos have access to this transformative technology.



At the same time, we hope that the FCC will not include burdensome regulations on private sector providers in the national broadband plan. Private sector investment is a major driver in maintaining and building out new communications infrastructure. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, over \$1 in every \$5 in private capital invested in the U.S. economy in 2008 went into communications and information technology. That is a \$455 billion investment. If providers are hamstrung by regulations and not given the authority to manage their networks, they will be less likely to invest in our technological future. Without the private sector's sizable investment, consumers' broadband prices could rise and further deployment of high-speed technologies could be stymied, thus detracting from the goal of universal access.

The Latino Coalition hopes that the FCC will create a national broadband plan that results in increased broadband adoption and deployment, particularly for groups who have been slow to acquire the latest technologies. The opportunities accessible with a broadband connection should be available to everyone.

Sincerely,

Hector V. Barreto
Chairman