

National Rural Health Association

In the Matter of: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), WC Docket No. 02-60,  
Universal Service Support Mechanism for Rural Healthcare

Notice of Exparte Communication

On August 27, 2010, Maggie Elehwany, Vice President of Government Affairs, and Danny Fernandez, Manager of Government Affairs for the National Rural Health Association (NRHA), met with Jamie Susskind, Ernesto Beckford, and Cindy Spiers of the FCC to discuss its notice of proposed rulemaking related to its proposed rural health care broadband programs (Docket No. 02-60).

During the meeting, the NRHA and FCC participants discussed the NPRM's implications for rural health providers.

Specifically, we discussed the NPRM's request for comments on aligning this program's eligibility guidelines with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Meaningful Use of electronic health record (EHR) guidelines, the administrative burdens rural providers will face in applying for these programs, financial difficulties rural providers face, and other issues relevant to the NPRM's goals.

We also discussed our intent to provide the Commission with a comprehensive NRHA comment letter. Staff suggested that, for any areas in which we believe the Commission's proposals fall short of its intended goals, we provide actual suggestions for improvements, and additionally requested that we encourage as many comment letters from individual NRHA coalition partners as possible.