

STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
MONTANA HIGHWAY PATROL DIVISION

Steve Bullock
Attorney General



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May 16, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20554-0005

RE: Universal Service Fund, Docket No. 10-90

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As the Chief of the Montana Highway Patrol with over 26 years of experience in Montana public safety issues, I am writing with regard to the Commission's apparent plan to reallocate the monies from the Universal Services Fund.

Montana is a rural state with over 147,000 square miles and a population of less than one million. That equates to a population density of less than 7 people per square mile. However, if you remove the more urban areas from the calculation, the population density would fall dramatically. The Montana Highway Patrol is one of the agencies responsible for public safety in all of Montana, including the rural sparsely populated areas. In many areas, wireless communication is the only form of communication available to people. We have a lot of Montanans who live in these remote areas or visit for hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities. Wireless communication is their only form of contacting public safety offices, including the Montana Highway Patrol, and other services reachable through 911, in case of an emergency.

The use of the Universal Services Fund to support wireless communication in these areas is essential. Loss of such funding for any wireless networks could result in a reduction of communication services in these areas, therefore negatively impacting the Patrol's ability to respond to emergencies. As you evaluate the needs for various public service facilities, I ask you to keep in mind the necessity of having wireless communication available in these remote areas.



Chairman Genachowski
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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Colonel Michael T. Tooley
Chief, Montana Highway Patrol

cc: Michael J. Copps, Commissioner
Robert M. McDowell, Commissioner
Mignon Clyburn, Commissioner
Meredith Attwell Baker, Commissioner
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary