

Marlene Dortch  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re:** *Connect America Fund, WC Docket, No. 10-90, National Broadband Plan for Our Future, GN Docket No. 09-51, Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers, 07-135, High-Cost Universal Service Support, WC Docket No. 05-337, Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime, CC Docket No. 01-92*

To the Commission:

I started serving the telecommunications industry in 1969. Shortly after that I discovered the rural telephone companies & cooperatives that serve our country. I fell in love with rural America, the people who live and work in rural America and the people that dedicated their lives to bringing voice and then bandwidth to rural America.

I have often compared rural Eastern Europe to rural America. In rural Eastern Europe communications were heavily controlled or did not exist. A rural economy did not exist in Eastern Europe in the 1950, 60, 70....

In the U.S., thanks to the October 28, 1949 amendment to the Rural Electrification Act authorizing REA to make loans to improve and extend telephone service in rural areas, we enjoy a robust rural economy.

According to some analyst, like:

March 11, 2009

**US Telecommuting Forecast, 2009 To 2016**

Telecommuting Will Rise To Include 43% Of US Workers By 2016

by Ted Schadler

with Matthew Brown, Sara Burnes

"Today, more than 34 million US adults telecommute at least occasionally. Fueled by broadband adoption, better collaboration tools, and growing management experience, the US telecommuting ranks will swell to 63 million by 2016."

Telecommuter-Ready Communities like [www.forwardfergusfalls.org](http://www.forwardfergusfalls.org) will help drive our rural economy in the future. It will also help companies and organizations to diversity their workforce and not be as subject to bad weather or disasters. Rural telcos are the keys to deploying dependable rural bandwidth. <http://telecommutingmn.blogspot.com/> is also a very good resource that I would encourage you to visit.

I encourage the FCC to give deep consideration to the Consensus Framework created by rural, mid-size, and large carriers that could serve as the basis for sensible, measured, and carefully calibrated USF and inter-carrier compensation (ICC) reforms. Please do not depart from it.

Sincerely,

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