

This week the FCC is voting on a reform of the Universal Service Fund program. I agree with the agency that the program's goals are noble - but outdated - and that the agency must find a way to funnel its resources toward building broadband networks rather than phone lines.

However, the rules proposed in the industry-authored "ABC plan" would do little to promote the public interest. They would simply allow phone companies like AT&T and Verizon to extract billions more from consumers with no accountability.

Any new rules that you adopt must require phone companies to justify additional fees before they start taking even more hard-earned money out of our pockets. The Commission must require strong regulatory oversight in exchange for carriers' receiving this ratepayer-funded subsidy.

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Gentlemen:

Since they already collect that "universal fee", can we just leave it at that ? I have been informed by an online contact living in Switzerland that they get 100 MB broadband. If this is true, then we as a first world country should have it also. At present I would like to see what our redirected "universal service fee" can do without additional increase.

Thank you, Gordon Heavern