

This week the FCC plans to vote on a reform of the Universal Service Fund program. This program needs to be brought up to date, but that the agency needs to find a way to funnel its resources toward extending Internet access and building broadband networks rather than phone lines.

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 should require all money collected under the Universal Service Charge to be spend on actual improvements constructed for the public benefit, not for increased corporate profits. The Commission must require strong regulatory oversight in exchange for carriers' receiving any additional ratepayer-funded subsidy.