

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

**1492**

October 26, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As the Federal Communications Commission considers Universal Service Fund (USF) and inter-carrier compensation reform, we write to urge you to advance reforms that will ensure that America's rural communities benefit from high-speed Internet infrastructure.

In the last decade, the nation that created the Internet has gone from being the world leader in online access to falling behind other developed countries. Restoring American leadership in broadband will help create jobs and provide a platform for economic growth for years to come. We thus support efforts to modernize the universal service fund (USF) to support broadband, rather than just voice telephone access, and to make USF more sustainable.

Broadband is especially important for rural communities since new technologies can help overcome physical distances and geographic isolation to improve economic development, education, and healthcare. Rural areas should not be bypassed when it comes to deploying the latest Internet infrastructure. It would be unacceptable to have the fastest broadband networks built along our nation's coasts and in our major cities while large swaths of rural America--and our home state of New Mexico--are stuck on the wrong side of the digital divide.

We are thus encouraged to hear that the Commission plans to target Connect America Fund support on a granular basis to the places where market forces alone would not otherwise provide and sustain service. This is especially important to us in New Mexico, where we can see firsthand some of the disparities between communities in the state. The true test of overall USF and ICC reforms will be whether our constituents living in rural areas will benefit from reasonably comparable broadband service to those in urban areas. To achieve this, New Mexico's broadband providers need to be able to make and sustain investments in our rural communities.

In charting a course for universal service in the broadband era, we also ask that you pay specific attention to the challenge of extending high speed Internet access to Tribal lands. Today, Native American households' access to even basic telephone service is below 70 percent. Despite roughly \$4.5 billion dollars in annual high cost fund support nationwide, Indian country

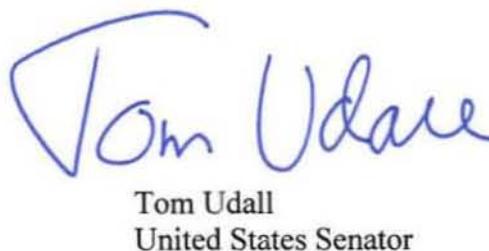
still faces many challenges for telephone access. USF must succeed when it comes to broadband.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working closely with you to bring more broadband access to rural communities in New Mexico and across America.

Sincerely,



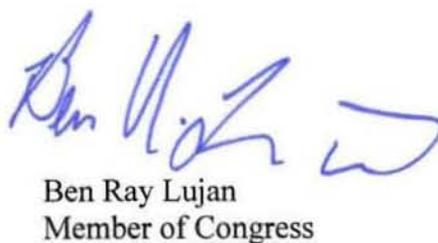
Jeff Bingaman  
United States Senator



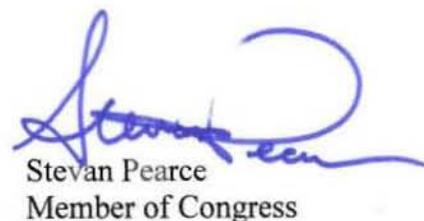
Tom Udall  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Lujan  
Member of Congress



Stevan Pearce  
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman  
United States Senate  
703 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bingaman:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding the Commission's efforts to reform and modernize the Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation system (ICC). Your thoughts and concerns were a valuable contribution to our process, and were considered as part of the Commission's deliberations.

On October 27, after many years of hard work on Capitol Hill, among the FCC's Commissioners, and by Commission staff, the Commission unanimously adopted a comprehensive Order overhauling the broken and backward-looking USF and ICC systems for the Internet age. By transitioning these programs to the Connect America Fund, we are delivering on our shared national goal of universal voice and broadband service – including universal mobile voice and broadband service – and enabling increased private sector investment in the indispensable infrastructure of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: broadband. Importantly, our reforms are fiscally responsible, eliminating waste and inefficiency, using market-based mechanisms to target support where it is needed, and putting the Fund on a firm budget.

The Commission's Order will create jobs beginning in 2012, and lay the foundation for enduring job creation, economic growth, and U.S. global competitiveness for years to come.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the Order's "Executive Summary." Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish at the end.

Julius Genachowski

Enclosure



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Martin Heinrich  
U.S. House of Representatives  
336 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Heinrich:

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Julius Genachowski

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JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján  
U.S. House of Representatives  
330 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Luján:

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Julius Genachowski

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Tom Udall  
United States Senate  
110 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Udall:

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