

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
3RD DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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October 19, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St NW
8-B201
Washington, DC 20554

*WCP
USF/FCC
1506*

Dear Mr. Genachowski:

I write to express my support for reform of the Universal Service Fund and request that it emphasize broadband deployment and adoption in rural areas. Developments in modern technology have facilitated growth in many sectors of our society. Technological innovations have also made business operations more efficient and productive. One of the most important technologies that affects businesses daily is the availability of high-speed internet access. Many businesses in large metropolitan and medium-sized suburban areas have benefited from broadband expansion. Unfortunately, however, some sectors of our economy have not garnered as many benefits as their counterparts surrounding large metropolitan areas, namely the agricultural sector and operations located within rural areas.

It is this geographical disadvantage that has led many groups representing the interests of those who are adversely affected by the lack of access to high-speed internet to call for reform to the Universal Service Fund (USF). The USF has, since its establishment through the Telecommunications Act of 1996, provided support and discounts for providers and subscribers of telecommunications services through four programs: high-cost support; low-income support; schools and libraries support; and rural health care support.

In today's global society, it is critical that individuals in America also be equipped with access to broadband. High-speed Internet access is an integral part of our economy and society. The importance of integrating our rural areas into the mainstream technologies of major cities and suburban areas should not be underrated nor dismissed. This "digital divide" is unsatisfactory, and more should be done to upgrade the technological capacity of our rural communities. The reform of the Universal Service Fund to include broadband deployment and adoption is a proper move forward for this country's technological capabilities.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

November 17, 2011

The Honorable Robert C. Scott
U.S. House of Representatives
1201 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Scott:

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 21st 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, appearing to be "J. Genachowski", written over a horizontal line.

Julius Genachowski

Enclosure