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January 15, 2013

USF-CAF  
0032

Mr. Julius Genachowski  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission  
Room: 8-B201  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: In the Matter of Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90,  
Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (Released: Nov. 19, 2012)

Mr. Chairman:

I respect you for taking on a tough and controversial task – overhauling the Universal Service Fund (USF) and intercarrier compensation and creating the Connect America Fund (CAF). It is vital to rural America that your reforms succeed. At this stage, I must observe that relatively modest gains have been achieved for rural consumers. While the FCC has set aside \$600 million to invest in new broadband deployment during 2012 and 2013, much of this capital remains on the sidelines, and the wait for broadband is stretching on.

As the FCC has noted, more than 80 percent of Americans without broadband live in those rural areas served by price cap companies. That amounts to more than 18 million people. CAF Phase I was designed to bring rapid broadband expansion in these areas, and if CAF-I lags, so will broadband deployment. The current slow pace is regrettable when you consider that the FCC financed state-of-the-art networks for thousands of other rural Americans a decade or more ago.

Fortunately, a favorable outcome is at hand in the FCC's November 19<sup>th</sup> further notice (FNPRM), which says the goal for the FCC should be to refine the CAF rules to enable price cap carriers to bring service to eligible unserved households as quickly as possible. I encourage the FCC to proceed with a second round of CAF projects in 2013 that fully utilizes the \$600 million set aside for this important work during 2012 and 2013.

**Broadband is an economic driver that provides rural Americans access to educational opportunities, remote healthcare applications, and high-speed wireless service. Applications relying on a robust broadband infrastructure are now essential in agricultural markets, for emerging small businesses, and for consumer access to online retailers. It is vital to our rural constituents that the FCC refine the rules so these funds are rapidly invested in broadband infrastructure that will help attract more businesses and jobs to these areas.**

Sincerely,



**H. MORGAN GRIFFITH**  
Member of Congress

**CC: Mr. Greg Guice, Director, Office of Legislative Affairs**



Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Legislative Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Office of the Director

February 27, 2013

The Honorable Morgan Griffith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1108 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Griffith:

Thank you for your letter commenting on the Commission's *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* in its Universal Service Connect America Fund (CAF) proceeding. The Commission is dedicated to distributing all CAF funds in the most effective manner to preserve and advance voice and broadband service, including accelerating the deployment of modern communications networks to consumers who lack access to robust broadband. Your views are very important and will be included in the record of the proceeding and considered as part of the Commission's review.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory Guice".

Gregory Guice  
Director  
Office of Legislative Affairs