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The newly proposed FCC rules could lead to the redlining of rural broadband Internet services. In brief, this would allow service providers to create fast lanes for those in urban areas who can afford additional costs and fees while leaving rural voters behind. Currently, there are 14.5 million rural people with no access to Internet services at all, let alone the millions more who get by with substandard access and connection speeds.

Broadband access for rural Americans is a necessity. High-speed Internet plays a major role in rural businesses as they currently exist and is paramount in their ability to change and grow into the future. Rural schools are also dependent on broadband connections to keep pace with national and global educational standards. Furthermore, access to broadband services actually saves lives.

In rural areas, access to affordable, timely healthcare is not always a given. Many rural residents must travel excessive distances to receive the care they need. Those people who are lucky enough to have a small rural or Critical Access Hospital in their town rely on services within those facilities that can only be produced as a result of a high-speed fiber connection at the site. Looking forward, major advances in telemedicine are making the future of rural healthcare much more promising for providing adequate care to all Americans at a greatly reduced cost to the patient, healthcare provider, and the government.

All of these issues, and indeed nearly every facet of life for your rural constituents are at stake. Please classify Internet services as Title II Telecommunications Services.