



ADVANCING GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

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December 18, 2007

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
U.S. Senate Agriculture, Nutrition &
Forestry Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Saxby Chambliss
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Agriculture, Nutrition &
Forestry Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Chairman
U.S. House Agriculture Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Ranking Member
U.S. House Agriculture Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Harkin and Peterson and Ranking Members Chambliss and Goodlatte;

On behalf of the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA), I am writing to thank you for your respective Committee's support of the deployment of broadband technology in rural areas and to urge your support for the inclusion in the final conference measure broadband mapping language as included in the Senate bill.

Specifically, we support the provisions in each bill to place a priority on broadband loan applications which would serve communities with greatest need. The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) broadband loan program provides a key incentive for nationwide broadband build-out, particularly in rural and underserved America.

This money has a positive, significant impact not only on those who will finally experience the benefits of two-way, high speed voice, video and data communications, but also on the manufacturers and suppliers of communications equipment and services who contribute to the job creation, equipment sales, the development of new services and technical innovations as a result of the loans.

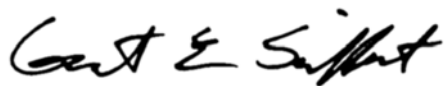
Complimentary to these efforts is language included in the Senate version, which would authorize a nationwide program similar to the highly successful ConnectKentucky effort. TIA has been a strong supporter of broadband mapping efforts like that in the Senate bill and a similar bill, H.R. 3919, passed by the House earlier this fall. These efforts to determine the need and distribution of broadband in America are critical as Congress creates incentives for investment.

TIA has long-advocated for the ubiquitous deployment of next-generation broadband networks, as they directly impact the productivity of our industries and our economy, and pivotally affect public safety, education, health care, and countless other functions in our daily lives. Such capability will equip every person with the tools necessary to compete in the 21st century, making them far more productive, increasing their standard of living, and enhancing economic and physical security.

As the Congress convenes the conference committee to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate farm bills, we urge you and your fellow conferees to continue your leadership in the area of

bringing broadband to rural America and to include broadband mapping provisions in the final measure. Thank you for your leadership and attention to these critical matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant E. Seiffert". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Grant Seiffert
President
Telecommunications Industry Association