



July 8, 2010

Senator Harry Reid
Majority Leader
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Richard J. Durbin
Majority Whip
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator John D. Rockefeller
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Technology
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator John F. Kerry
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Senators Reid, Durbin, Inouye, Rockefeller, and Kerry:

On behalf of National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA), the National Association of Counties (NACO) and the local governments around the country that we represent, we express our concern about National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and Rural Utility Services (RUS) funding rescissions that were made in the Supplemental Afghanistan War Funding Bill passed by the House of Representatives last week (H.R. 4899). We urge the Senate to reinstate these funds.

One of the last minute amendments passed on the House floor would rescind \$302 million from the NTIA and \$300 million from the RUS initially appropriated for the funding of broadband infrastructure deployment and increased broadband availability through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) and Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) respectively.

We understand that budget reductions are necessary right now. We also understand that all agencies and programs have to do what they can to reduce unnecessary or discretionary spending. However, we believe that the cuts specifically to the BTOP and BIP programs will have a negative impact on broadband deployment and on job creation and are therefore not the proper programs for funding rescissions.

The BTOP and BIP programs have been dramatic successes of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Even though the second round of funding is still underway, the impact these programs have had in community broadband development and job creation has



been obvious and substantial in our nation's communities. The proposed funding rescission would necessarily mean that some states would be left without funding, contrary to the intent of the program. It would also mean that many applicants who have dedicated significant amounts of resources, time, and money to applying based on the premise that monies would be available would not be given a fair opportunity to compete.

Furthermore, the proposed rescissions to BTOP and BIP would likely cost our citizens thousands of jobs that would not be created by the program. Job creation was one of the central purposes of the ARRA and the BTOP and BIP programs in particular. Budget cuts should be targeted at wasteful spending and unnecessary programs – they should leave alone programs that are intended to (and do) create jobs in a time when unemployment is such a significant issue for our country. Please reinstate the full funding for these critically important programs

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Fellman".

Ken Fellman
President
NATOA

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry S. Naake".

Larry Naake
Executive Director
NACO

Cc: Lawrence Strickling, Assistant Secretary, NTIA
Jonathan Adelstein, Administrator, RUS
Tom Power, NTIA
Jessica Zufolo, RUS