

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 27, 2014

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

The importance of broadband communications networks to America's economic development has never been more apparent. In our interconnected 21st century economy, job growth will depend on our ability to deliver faster and more reliable broadband to our businesses, our schools and our homes. Accordingly, local communities should have the opportunity to decide for themselves how to invest in their own infrastructure, including the options of working with willing incumbent carriers, creating incentives for private sector development, entering into creative public-private partnerships, or even building their own networks, if necessary or appropriate.

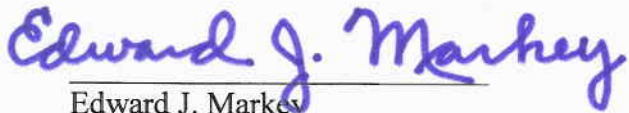
We are pleased by your recent comments about community broadband, particularly your assertion that municipal governments should not be inhibited if they wish to pursue the creation of their own networks. Communities are often best suited to decide for themselves if they want to invest in their own infrastructure and to choose the approach that will work best for them. In fact, it was the intent behind the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to eliminate barriers to entry into the broadband market and promote competition in order to stimulate more innovation and consumer choice. We urge you and your colleagues to utilize the full arsenal of tools Congress has enacted to promote competitive broadband service to ensure America's communities obtain a 21st century infrastructure to succeed in today's fiercely competitive global economy.

Around the globe, advanced broadband networks are stimulating innovation and investment. We believe that the countries that make affordable access to such networks most widely and quickly available to their businesses, institutions, and residents will be the ones that are most successful in the information-based global economy. The United States must remain one of those countries. Our nation cannot afford to fall behind or to close off viable options for its communities, especially those in underserved rural areas, to connect and prosper.

We ask that you respond to our inquiry within 30 days about what plans the Commission intends to pursue to make progress on community broadband.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



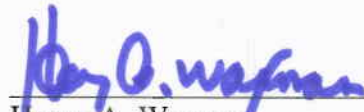
Edward J. Markey
U.S. Senator



Mike Doyle
U.S. Representative



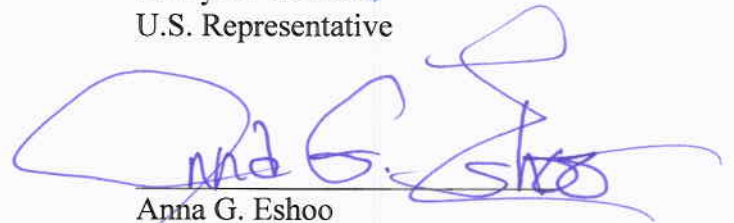
Al Franken
U.S. Senator



Henry A. Waxman
U.S. Representative



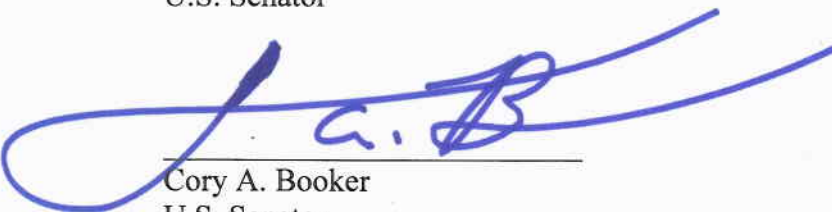
Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senator



Anna G. Eshoo
U.S. Representative



Richard Blumenthal
U.S. Senator



Cory A. Booker
U.S. Senator