



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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CEO and Executive Director:
TOM COCHRAN

January 27, 2010

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Robert M. McDowell
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Meredith Attwell Baker
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Michael J. Capps
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioners:

As the Federal Communications Commission enters final deliberations on a National Broadband Plan, we write to urge you to reject proposals that would limit local authority to manage local rights-of-way and/or would negatively impact local budgets.

Congress recognized the importance of local control in Section 253 of the Communications Act. Moreover, any local government revenue loss in these difficult economic times could very well result in additional cutbacks of critical city services. The ongoing recession has had a devastating impact on city budgets. Cities of all sizes in all parts of the nation have been forced to institute layoffs, furloughs, service reductions, and fee increases. The next fiscal year looks even worse for cities, with more than four in five cities anticipating a budget shortfall. The nation's mayors do not believe Congress or the Obama Administration intended for the National Broadband Plan to be used as a vehicle to take revenue from city budgets in order to subsidize private entities.

Cities and their metropolitan areas are where 84 percent of our people live and more than 90 percent of future economic growth will occur. Mayors understand the role that broadband can play in enhancing educational opportunities, promoting economic development, improving health care delivery, assisting in achieving energy efficiency goals, and quite simply, determining if our cities can compete in the world economy. We also believe that rights-of-way management has served to promote, not retard, universal access to broadband services, while at the same time, protecting public health and safety, and keeping rights-of-way accessible for safe transportation.

The United States Conference of Mayors has been an active participant in the effort to develop a National Broadband Plan. And, we look forward to continuing to work with the Commission as you enter final deliberations and before the National Broadband Plan is forwarded to Congress. We appreciate the robust and open manner in which you have conducted the process for crafting the National Broadband Plan. Please feel free to contact Tom Cochran or Ron Thaniel of the Conference staff at 202-861-6711 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth B. Kautz
Mayor of Burnsville
President



Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director

Cc: David Agnew