



January 5, 2009

The Honorable Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Madam Speaker Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Reid:

The Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies (OPASTCO) urges Congress to approve initiatives to invest in rural broadband infrastructure as part of its economic stimulus program. Our proposals are outlined in the attached white paper authored by the Digital Policy Institute (DPI), an independent think tank at Ball State University.

Grants for broadband deployment to existing rural telephone companies will result in immediate job creation while expediting the availability of modern communications services in hard to serve areas. Investment in broadband infrastructure will benefit new technologies and future innovation while furthering the stated goals of providing clean energy (smart grids), expanded educational opportunities (distance learning), and rural health care coverage (telemedicine).

The attached DPI paper outlines a forward looking approach to delivering true high-speed broadband service to rural communities. Broadband connectivity has quickly become the economic driver for not only the United States, but also the entire world. Rural areas of our nation cannot be left behind.

Adoption of broadband service is an important aspect of this initiative. OPASTCO members stand ready to serve as conduits for computer distribution and training for those consumers and small businesses that need assistance. Our member companies and cooperatives are a part of the communities that they serve and have the technical expertise needed to further the goals of broadband adoption and use of the Internet.

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
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January 5, 2009
Page 2

OPASTCO believes the plan articulated by DPI presents a “shovel ready” approach to job creation and infrastructure development.

OPASTCO looks forward to working with Congress on these proposals. If you need more information, please contact Randy Tyree, OPASTCO Director of Legislative and Industry Affairs, at 202-659-5990 or rxt@opastco.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John N. Rose". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John N. Rose
President

Attachment

cc: Members of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee
Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
Members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee
Members of the House Appropriations Committee