

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 17, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you consider a plan to address the infrastructure needs of our country, the co-chairs of the bipartisan Senate Broadband Caucus write to urge you to include dedicated, stand-alone funding for broadband deployment. Our rural communities have connectivity needs that are not being met, limiting economic opportunity and growth. Prioritizing direct funding support for broadband deployment in an infrastructure package will help close the digital divide and ensure our country maintains its global competitiveness.

Policies that encourage investment in communications infrastructure and streamline the construction process will help speed up the deployment of high-speed broadband. However, these policies must support, not replace, investments in rural America. In parts of the country where geography or population density make deploying and maintaining broadband networks a significant challenge, stand-alone support will help bring economic and social benefits for rural consumers.

Bringing new telecommunications infrastructure to unserved consumers in the most rural, low-density parts of the country can be aided by direct federal investments. In these communities, generating private investment can be difficult. Without dedicated funding for broadband deployment, proposals to bring broadband to unserved areas may struggle to compete with other larger infrastructure projects. Stand-alone funding for broadband will ensure that telecommunications infrastructure is advanced alongside needed upgrades to our roads, rail, bridges, ports and waterways.

There is strong bipartisan support for including broadband funding in an infrastructure package. Boosting current investments in broadband deployment will provide new economic opportunities in communities that are struggling to compete. Expanding access to broadband is the infrastructure challenge of our generation and an infrastructure plan for the 21st century must address the broadband connectivity issues facing rural America.

Thank you for your attention to this important request. We look forward to working with you on this critical issue.

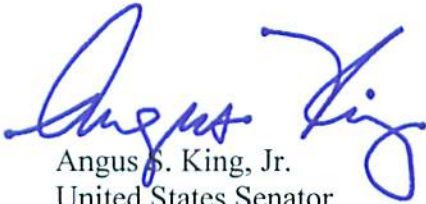
Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



John Boozman
United States Senator



Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator