

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD STAPLES
COMMISSIONER



October 14, 2009

Mr. Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

Congratulations on your new Chairmanship. I encourage you to focus the FCC's resources on the goal of universal Internet service. In my capacity as a public official, I lead one of the agencies responsible for rural development in Texas. Having fast Internet access is critical to the future of rural residents, farmers, ranchers and other small-town businesses.

I am thrilled to see more and more of our residents gain access to high-speed Internet, both wired and wireless, and trust that you share my enthusiasm. Similarly, I trust you will understand when I express concern that the proposal to levy new regulations on Internet services may hinder the continued deployment of broadband in our rural communities. I am concerned that these proposed new "Net Neutrality" rules would mark an unprecedented level of regulation on what has been a very successful industry.

It appears that Internet service providers have been able to invest, compete and grow so well, in large part, because the federal government has maintained a very light regulatory hand. It's clear that American consumers enjoy the widest choice of service providers and mobile devices at some of the world's lowest rates. As wireless investment continues, we can foresee a time when advanced wireless services will be available in virtually every community.

Wireless Internet holds new promise for rural Americans – many of whom work in their fields or their vehicles, or who commute long distances to schools or jobs. Mobile access would be especially beneficial to them. As public servants we must work to bring such advanced services to all of our citizens.

In your recent speeches you have acknowledged that it's essential that government regulate Internet service only to the extent necessary, and no further. You've also committed to data-driven decision making. I encourage you to maintain those high standards during the FCC's coming deliberations. Doing so, I believe, will be in the best interests of rural citizens in Texas and throughout the country.

Sincerely Yours,

Todd Staples

TS/CJF/cjf

