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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
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Dear Chairman Genachowski:

As you develop recommendations for the National Broadband Plan, a valuable goal would be to ensure that all Americans, regardless of their income or location, have access to high-quality broadband services. To that end, the Commission's plan should promote substantially higher Internet speeds and higher capacity networks and should include two goals.

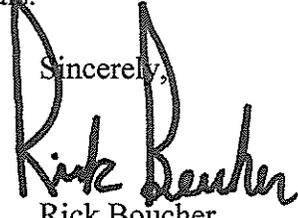
First, the Commission should seek universal availability of broadband. We must reduce the number of unserved households and substantially increase the broadband adoption rate as quickly as possible. We are well along in Congress in drafting legislation that can help further this important goal, as reflected in the Universal Service Reform Act under consideration by the Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, and the Internet. I would welcome any suggestions you might have beyond adoption of this legislation to advance this important goal, such as means to provide additional support to anchor institutions, libraries, research institutions, and community organizations.

Second, the Commission should explicitly endorse a goal for minimum broadband speeds, of at least 50 megabits downstream and 20 megabits upstream for 80 percent of the population by 2015. Without committing to such ambitious, but achievable, levels of speed and service, the promises of telemedicine, distance learning and telecommuting may remain a far-off dream rather than a near-term reality. If we fail to achieve such a goal, our nation will likely remain well behind other industrialized countries that are racing ahead and gaining a competitive advantage by doing so.

If we are ambitious enough, the United States could again rank first internationally in providing competitive, high-speed broadband service to households and businesses throughout the nation. Absent adoption of an ambitious goal, it could take the United States more than a decade to match current broadband speeds in, for example,

South Korea. Accordingly, the development of accelerated broadband speeds as standard offerings for consumers is an essential part of the foundation for the nation's long-term economic stability and prosperity.

I look forward to receiving your recommendations and working with you and your colleagues to advance our shared goals.

Sincerely,

Rick Boucher
Member of Congress