

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 10, 2014

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The Honorable Thomas Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

We write regarding the Commission's July 11 meeting to consider a Report and Order to modernize the E-Rate program and expand support for Wi-Fi connectivity for schools and libraries.

We urge you to take into account the objections raised to the Wi-Fi proposal in a June 20, 2014 letter signed by more than a dozen national education organizations representing E-Rate program beneficiaries as well as the rural specific concerns addressed in a letter dated June 30, 2014 signed by six organizations representing rural schools. In addition, we hope you will give special consideration to the July 8, 2014 letter from Senators Rockefeller and Markey. We agree with the views raised in these letters.

We oppose any proposal that would change the E-Rate distribution mechanism to one that provides funding based on a per-student or per-square foot calculation for Wi-Fi. Such a formula would disadvantage rural school and libraries. We also oppose modifying the program's poverty calculation from school-based to district-based because it is less responsive to meeting the needs of a specific school.

We hope the Commission will make changes to the proposal in response to these concerns before moving forward with E-Rate modernization.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow



Carl Levin