United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 5, 2014

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

We write to express our deep concern with your comments at the 2014 National Cable and Telecommunications Association cable show several weeks ago. You stated, "If municipal governments – the same ones that granted cable franchises – want to pursue it [taxpayer funded broadband], they shouldn't be inhibited by state laws. I have said before, that I believe the FCC has the power – and I intend to exercise that power – to preempt state laws that ban competition from community broadband."

The insinuation that the Federal Communications Commission will force taxpayer funded competition against private broadband providers – against the wishes of the states – is deeply troubling. Inserting the Commission into the states' economic and fiscal affairs in such a cavalier fashion shows a lack of respect for states' rights.

State governments across the country offer a stark contrast to the heavy hand of the federal government, especially in terms of the states' superior capability to protect the taxpayers from unnecessary debt, spending, and waste. States are much closer to their citizens and can meet their needs better than an unelected bureaucracy in Washington, D.C. The federal government has already saddled our states with enough unfunded liabilities. Your proposed community broadband experiment presents an unnecessary and risky government liability.

The last thing the Commission should do in these trying fiscal times, with so many other important priorities, is usurp state policy with respect to municipal broadband. State political leaders are accountable to the voters who elect them, and the Commission would be well-advised to respect state sovereignty. We look forward to your timely response, and we hope you will think critically about the Commission's role and how it can more appropriately interact with our state authorities.

Sincerely,

Deb Fischer
United States Senator

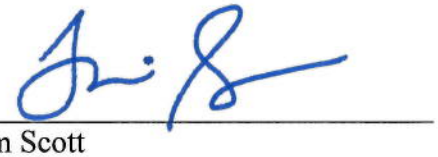
Ron Johnson
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



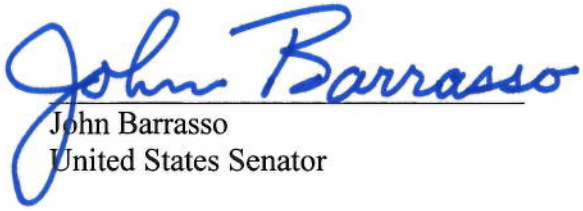
Marco Rubio
United States Senator



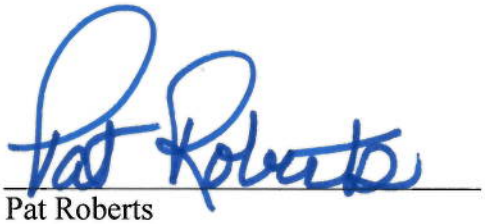
Tim Scott
United States Senator



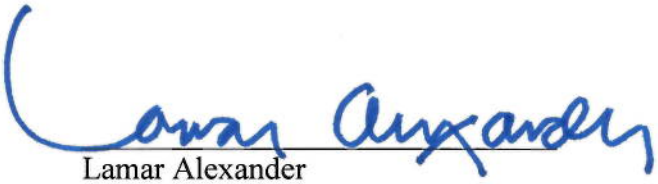
Mike Enzi
United States Senator



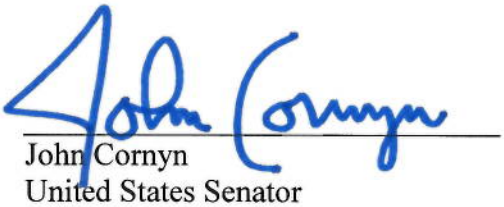
John Barrasso
United States Senator



Pat Roberts
United States Senator



Lamar Alexander
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



Tom Coburn
United States Senator