

In this age of the iPhone and Blackberry, more than 20 million of our fellow citizens — the vast majority in rural areas — still use a dial-up telephone line for Internet access!

Millions more — both rural and urban — can't afford computers and Internet access.

Yet big telephone and cable companies won't bring broadband Internet to rural America.

Why? It's not profitable, they claim. And they are right.

Their business models do not work in rural America!

There's a better way:

Let rural Americans solve their own broadband problem!

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When TV goes digital on Feb. 19, 2009, a new way for high-speed Internet access in rural America will be possible.

Will Congress and the FCC unlock this gateway to a new era of innovation and prosperity for rural Americans?

Look inside for the answer.

On the Internet, far too many rural Americans ride second-class.



Here's how:

First, tell the FCC to return the public airwaves of rural America to, well, rural Americans!

When TV goes digital in February, 2009, TV broadcasters will use only a small portion of the public airwaves they are allocated. In most rural areas, 60 to 70 percent of these digital airwaves will be vacant!

These “white spaces” are perfect for delivering high-speed wireless Internet access. This spectrum can carry a broadband signal that penetrates buildings, travels great distances, and penetrates heavy foliage.

White spaces can deliver rural broadband access!

UNLICENSED Use is Key!

However, if Congress and the FCC license the white spaces, big carriers will continue to dominate the nation's broadband services — and rural America will continue to suffer under absentee-owned networks.

Licensing the white spaces will also reduce potential markets for new broadband wireless devices and applications — forcing technology innovators to seek more business-friendly markets abroad.

Unlicensed use is the key to unlock new innovation, new jobs... and more broadband access for rural America!

It's Time for Action!

With the stroke of a pen, the FCC and Congress can give local control of broadband wireless Internet to rural entrepreneurs and nonprofit visionaries — people who live and work in the communities they serve.

Now that's innovation!

Imagine what the technology innovators will create on this new broadband canvas!

- » Advanced telemedicine delivered by first responders instead of a long ambulance ride to a distant hospital.
- » Students, young and old, taking advanced online courses... from the back porch or the back forty.
- » Farmers and business entrepreneurs creating “buy local” networks and purchasing co-ops.
- » On-site “green jobs” training for rural youth using web-based, best practices from around the globe.
- » Ag scientists receiving real-time video and data via mobile devices from local growers... boosting sustainable farming yields and practices.

UNLICENSED use of the vacant TV channels is an economic and social revival waiting to happen in rural America

Locally-owned networks using the “white spaces”...

- » can revive community self-help traditions
- » spur small business start-ups and innovation
- » reduce rural transportation costs
- » level the playing field for rural entrepreneurs
- » boost rural health, education and social benefits.

These rural organizations have filed a letter with the FCC urging UNLICENSED use of the vacant TV channels:

Center for Rural Strategies

Main Street Project

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Native Public Media

Mountain Area Information Network

Southern California Tribal Digital Village

Access Humboldt

Center for Rural Affairs

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

HandMade in America

Northern Michigan Broadband Cooperative

Tell Congress and the FCC!

It's time to bring the benefits of broadband access to ALL rural homes and businesses.

It's time to return the rural public airwaves to rural America!