**2011 HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS** 

HCR 3022

#### 2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

#### **House Political Subdivisions Committee**

Prairie Room, State Capitol

HCR 3022 February 10, 2011 Job # 14391

☐ Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

#### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Urging the Federal Communications Commission to make substantive changes to the National Broadband Plan so that the plan does not limit the future economic livelihood and social well-being of rural consumers.

#### Minutes:

Testimony #1

Chairman Johnson: Opened the hearing on HCR 3022.

David Crothers, ND Association of Telecommunications Cooperative: (See testimony #!) This resolution encourages the FCC to make those changes in the plan that it does not limit the future; nor the livelihood or the social well being of rural consumers in the US. It also encourages our congressional delegation to work with the federal agency to ensure it understands the importance of the robust broadband deployment to rural ND and how the current draft of the plan needs to be dramatically altered if we are going to enjoy that future. I have also enclosed a map at the very end of the independent telephone company service territory in the state of ND.

Rep. Shirley Meyer: Are there different levels of broad band now or is it just the number of megabits?

David Crothers: There are different speeds of broadband available. Typically companies tier those speeds to what the customer wants to purchase according to their budget and use. Someone that primarily sends emails would not have a need for very much capacity. Much of this investment is to enable that network to go faster and have more capability.

Rep. Koppelman: Under what premise does the FCC chairman propose the plan that has been floated? Are they just interested in numbers of households, is that why it is focused on urban areas? What is the rational that we are trying to change?

David Crothers: There are a number of rational. There are unserved households in the US. There are some providers who have not gone out and pushed out as far as they could. This plan proposes to do that. One of the problems however is that the FCC owns studies indicate that if we want to move everyone to four megabits in this country it is probably a \$50 billion solution. If we want to take everyone to a hundred megabits it is a \$350 billion

House Political Subdivisions Committee HCR 3022 February 10, 2010 Page 2

solution. That universal service fund is \$4.6 billion; a fraction of that. It is almost as if the agency and chairman have a misguided view of it all. They know what it costs, but yet they want to freeze it at this \$4.6 billion. On the other hand it will severely harm all of those who have used the universal service. Just simply building it doesn't end the problem. It needs to grow; it needs to evolve. We use one hundred percent more and I think you folks that have some experience with the information technology department; they will come in and tell you universities are using 100% every year. We experience much the same thing in the way our subscribers use their broad band network.

Rep. Koppelman: don't we need to broaden our focus a little bit?

David Crothers: No objections to broadening it. We are working in consent with some others. This identical resolution is already been passed in the state of South Dakota, and we have been working with congressional delegations throughout the Midwest.

Rep. Heilman: I totally support this. I know how critically important the initiative of high speed internet excess is to the company that I work for. Will there be other states in the Midwest pursuing this type of action get everybody on the same page? Because this is going to be a problem if this goes through like that?

David Crothers: Yes. South Dakota has already passed an identical resolution. Iowa it is already through the House of Representatives there. Montana passed a similar resolution six months ago, but without this detail about the national broadband plan. North Dakota is somewhat advanced as far they are through their session already. Minnesota they have the language but they have some issues but yes they are.

Rep. Headland: I am here to introduce the bill and ask for your support. I just want to express how important it is that all citizens of North Dakota have excess to broad band and how important I believe it is that the legislature is on the record of that type of support for our citizens.

Julie Ellingson, ND Stockman's Association: The nature of the livestock industry requires beef producers to live and work in rural areas and we have robust businesses with customers around the globe. In order to service those customers and conduct our business effectively and competitively we need to excess to reliable high quality and affordable communication services. For this reason we support this resolution.

Opposition: None

Neutral: None

Hearing closed.

Do Pass Motion Made by Rep. Heilman: Seconded by Rep. Shirley Meyer:

Vote: 13 Yes 0 No 1 Absent Carrier: Rep. Heilman:

Consent calendar.

House Political Subdivisions Committee HCR 3022 February 10, 2010 Page 3

Hearing closed

Date: <u>2-/0-//</u> Roll Call Vote #: \_\_/

#### 2011 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HER 2022

ouse Political Subdivisions				Commi	ttee
Check here for Conference Co	mmittee	9			
egislative Council Amendment Num	ber				
Action Taken	Do Not	t Pass	Amended Ad	opt	
Rerefer to A  Motion Made By Rep. Helm			Reconsider conded By	eyr	<u></u>
Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Nancy Johnson	1		Rep. Kilichowski	V	
Vice Chairman Hatelstad	2		Rep. Shirley Meyer	V	\
Rep. Beadle	1/		Rep. Mock	V	
Rep. Devlin	1		Rep. Zaiser		<del> </del>
Rep. Heilman	2				<u> </u>
Rep. Klemin	V				
Rep. Koppelman	V				
Rep. Kretschmar	1/				<del></del>
Rep. Maragos	2/				
Rep. Pietsch	$\nu$				<del></del> -
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Total (Yes)	13		No		
Absent				·	
Absent Floor Assignment	2p. L	Harl	man		
If the vote is on an amendment,					

Consent Calendar

Com Standing Committee Report February 18, 2011 7:10am

Module ID: h\_stcomrep\_33\_001 Carrier: Heilman

#### REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HCR 3022: Political Subdivisions Committee (Rep. N. Johnson, Chairman) recommends DO PASS and BE PLACED ON THE CONSENT CALENDAR (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3022 was placed on the Tenth order on the calendar.

**2011 SENATE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS** 

HCR 3022

#### 2011 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

#### Senate Political Subdivisions Committee Red River Room, State Capitol

HCR 3022 March 14, 2011 15314

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	Committee Clerk Signature	Moure	

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#### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A concurrent resolution urging the Federal communications Commission to make substantive changes to the National Broadband Plan so that the plan does not limit the future economic livelihood and social well-being of rural consumers.

#### Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Andrist** opened the committee hearing on HCR 3022, a concurrent resolution urging the Federal Communications commission to make substantive changes to the National Broadband Plan so that the plan does not limit the future economic livelihood and social well-being of rural consumers.

**David Crothers**: North Dakota Association of Telecommunications Cooperatives testified in support of HCR 3022. See written testimony #1.

**Chairman Andrist**: You said the standard would give us four megabits. Give us an idea what we have now for most of North Dakota?

David Crothers: It depends on the company in some instances. We have companies offering 100 megabits of service in some areas. We have other companies where it is most difficult to get to geographically where those speeds are slower. The importance for the purposes of the National Broadband Plan and federal policy is that we as consumers use broadband in vastly different ways. Originally we started just using it for, emails and going to some websites. It has gotten progressively more and more that we seek to download from the internet more data, more voice, more video and our needs as consumers dramatically increase each and every year. Chairman Andrist: But I know because I am a rural telephone subscriber, that you people have completely been ahead of the investor owned sector in bringing services to us for whatever reason. Will fiber to the home when it is completed take most of your co-ops who now are already involved in that? Will this alter the time table for completion of that if the policy stands? David Crothers: If the plan stand as it is, it will dramatically change the timetable for that. There are many revenue streams that support a rural telecommunications company. The access charges that other carriers pay us to access your home and use, the rural providers' network. There's Universal Service Funding, there's consumer rates, just many, many revenues streams. The Universal Service Funding that which I referred to during my testimony, if that is

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee HCR 3022 March 14, 2011 Page 2

dramatically altered that is about 1/3 of many of these companies ability, a third of their revenue. That money of course is used to deploy the advance services that especially rural residence need. They don't live in a large city and the university is not on the other side of town. Increasingly people are using those networks for education or economic opportunities. Without that revenue, it not only affects the ability to build out, but also to pay for those companies that have already delivered fiber to the home to pay for that investment as well.

**Senator Olafson**: I wasn't quite aware of the extent of the problem we are potentially facing. I can tell you as a registered cattle breeder, the high speed internet access in the rural areas has been a tremendous improvement for our business. The dramatic changes have all happened in the last 4 or 5 years. It is all because people are now getting high speed internet access in the rural areas. It totally changed the way we market, purchase our replacement breeding stock and it is revolutionized the business. It is critical that we maintain that ability and what you're detailing here is a serious concern for those of us who are in that business. I would assume there is some political pressure being brought to bear at the national level to address the problem. What can you tell us about that effort?

David Crothers: It's almost exclusively what we do right now talking about the great importance. You noted the cattle business and how it has revolutionized your industry as in every other industry as well. We're working with a group of national associations and congressional delegations as well. The resolution you have before you is similar to resolutions that have been passed in a number of other great plain states, lowa and South Dakota. This geographic part of the nation does not feel that those at the Federal Communications Commission fully appreciate the difficulty and expense of serving in rural America. That is why we are trying to band together. What fronts are we doing this nationally? We are doing it at the federal agency and the Congress and we're grouping together out here too.

Chairman Andrist: Would it mean that if the policy stands as now set, would it mean that there would be no further funding from universally serviced funds for those that have 4 megabits? David Crothers: It's somewhat difficult to answer that and its' not possible to answer it with certainty. This national broadband plan was created by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). It requires that before any rules are adopted by the FCC, they have to issue what's called a Notice of Proposed Rule Making and they lay out the parameters and then all the interested parties argue in that form within and beyond those parameters actually. We won't know the answer until the FCC makes the final determinations or issues a ruling. We are working with the public service commission also and some language to explain how difficult this is for rural North Dakota—all of North Dakota.

**Senator Burckhard**, District 5. There is indeed a digital divide in this country and in this kind of economy this kind of global marketplace it is very important that all people have universal access to broadband. Example cited to committee. The difference it costs to serve someone in the urban city versus the rural area. But they deserve no less service in this kind of global market place. We look at as everybody deserves equal opportunity in the services that we provide and that nobody should have less service just because you live in the rural areas. Universal service used to mean land line service that 97% of the people in

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee HCR 3022 March 14, 2011 Page 3

America had a land line phone. Now that's changed. Anybody under the age of 35 these days doesn't have land line service or chooses not to. Now it is the broadband, and the speed and what services can you provide with the fiber optics to the home. So it is very important that we have a nationwide broad band plan that welcomes and encourages all people to have it, not just those in the metropolitan area and those in the cities. The trend is to fiber and the broad band service obviously. Education, business, competition, health care, all of those things depend on universal broadband service being equal.

**Julie Ellingson** North Dakota Stockmen's Association, support of HCR 3022. See written testimony #2, although she did not testify before the committee.

**Chairman Andrist**: Anyone further in support, opposition or neutral of this resolution.

Chairman Andrist: Dave, when you do fiber to the home, does your cable television service go through that same cable or do you still have to have a separate cable for coops that provide cable television service? Dave Crothers: The answer is the video also goes through the same cable, fiber. Increasingly, in what all the experts predict, is that the traditional cable systems companies the business model is slowly getting smaller. Increasingly you will use that broad band connection to go out to different sites and grab the video, the television show, the movie that you actually want to see when you want to see it. But the answer is yes and it's the momentum is increasing in that respect.

Chairman Andrist closed the hearing on HCR 3022.

Moved Do Pass: Senator Olafson 2<sup>nd</sup>: Senator Laffen

Roll call vote:

Carrier: Senator Olafson

Date: 3	/11/20	1/	
Roll Call	Vote #		

#### 2011 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 3022

Senate Political Subdivisions	<del></del>			Comn	nittee
Check here for Conference	ce Committe	е			
Legislative Council Amendment	Number _				
Action Taken: 🗹 Do Pass	☐ Do Not	Pass	Amended Adopt	Amen	dment
Rerefer t	to Appropriat	tions	Reconsider		
Motion Made By Senator O	lapon	Se	econded By <u>Senata Laf</u> y	'len	
Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator John Andrist	V		Senator Curtis Olafson	V	
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Senator Lonnie Laffen			Senator Jim Dotzenrod	1	
Senator Judy Lee		-	Geriator Gilli Botzerii Gu	<del>                                     </del>	
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If the vote is on an amendmer	V		ent:		

Com Standing Committee Report Module ID: s\_stcomrep\_48\_012
March 17, 2011 1:15pm Carrier: Olafson

#### REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HCR 3022: Political Subdivisions Committee (Sen. Andrist, Chairman) recommends DO PASS (5 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3022 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

Page 1 (1) DESK (3) COMMITTEE s\_stcomrep\_48\_012 **2011 TESTIMONY** 

HCR 3022





#### NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVES

P.O. Box 1144 • Mandan, ND 58554 Phone 701-663-1099 • Fax 701-663-0707 www.ndatc.com

#### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 3022

#### HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS COMMITTEE

#### FEBRUARY 10, 2011

#### DAVID CROTHERS NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVES

My name is David Crothers from the North Dakota Association of Telecommunications Cooperatives. The Association represents all of the cooperative and independent telephone companies in the State. Those companies serve over 150,000 homes and small businesses and approximately 96 percent of the geographic territory of the State.

House Concurrent Resolution 3022 does three things.

- 1- It urges the Federal Communications Commission to make substantive changes to the National Broadband Plan.
- 2- It encourages our Congressional Delegation to work with the Federal Communications Commission to demonstrate how important broadband development is to the economic health of North Dakota.
- 3- It directs the Secretary of State to forward this resolution to the Federal agency and our Congressional Delegation.

The National Broadband Plan is an initiative by the Federal Communications Commission to dramatically alter how universal service funds are disbursed by the entities charged with ensuring that rural Americans have access to affordable, modern telecommunications. The "Plan", which was released in October of 2010, makes a number of recommendations that will be extremely harmful to the residents of North Dakota and other rural areas of our nation.

The National Broadband Plan is harmful to North Dakota in a number of ways.

First, the cornerstone of the "Plan" according to Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski is to ensure that 100 million United States households have access to 100 Megabits of broadband speeds by the year 2020. Those 100 million homes are found exclusively on our nation's coasts and the most densely populated cities of our country. For North Dakota and the least populated areas of the United States, Chairman Genachowski proposes that we have access to only 4 Megabits of service...25 times more speed and capacity for urban users in the top 100 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA's) of the United States than rural residents. Any city in the nation with fewer than 510,000 people would not be included in the Chairman's plan for enhanced service.

The Association believes that a great and insurmountable digital divide will be created between rural and urban areas of this nation, if the disparate speeds proposed by Chairman Genachowski are adopted. It is widely acknowledged that affordable broadband availability is essential to access the economic and educational opportunities necessary to participate in today's world.

The problem with having two different classes of broadband availability in the United States is that education, businesses, research and medicine will gravitate to those geographic areas with the best infrastructure and access to broadband.

Increasingly, applications that individuals use to enhance their productivity using broadband will be written for the higher and higher speeds proposed by Chairman Genachowski. The result will be that the newest, the latest, the greatest applications will not be compatible with networks that run at slower speeds, which will make rural areas of the nation permanent second-class citizens.

Second, the National Broadband Plan substantially cuts the amount of Federal support being used to deploy high speed broadband to rural communities throughout the United States, especially in North Dakota.

This nation has had a policy since 1934 that has sought to provide universal service of telecommunications to everyone in the United States. It has also been the policy for several decades...most recently affirmed in the Telecommunications Act of 1996...that services and rates for consumers, regardless of where they live in this country, should be reasonably comparable. To ensure that this policy was effective, a Universal Service Fund was created to provide support in the very high cost, low-consumer density areas of the nation. It remains the law of the land today. Unfortunately, if the National Broadband Plan is adopted, rural consumers will pay far higher prices for broadband service than their urban counterparts.

Adoption of the National Broadband Plan, as written, and its contemplated reductions in universal service funding, intercarrier compensation and reductions in access revenues will severely retard the ability of independent telecommunications companies in North Dakota to invest in telecommunications infrastructure and will lead to higher prices for consumers.

The investment made by those companies today is substantial and expensive. From 2008 through 2010 the 18 telephone cooperatives and 6 small, locally-owned commercial companies invested \$307 million in simply improving their infrastructure to better allow members and subscribers to improve the speed and capacity of their networks. A good example is SRT Communications in Minot, which is in the midst of a \$50,000,000, 5 year project to take

fiber-to-the-home in order for its members to fully access the voice, video and data services currently available over the Internet. Virtually every other company in the State is also upgrading their networks.

Investment in telecom infrastructure will virtually cease if the National Broadband Plan is adopted. Telecommunications providers in North Dakota and throughout much of the great plains of this nation will experience the same thing. Also, prices will increase to the point of dramatically diminishing the number of people who can afford to subscribe to broadband services.

However, the "Plan" is the FCC's blueprint for future broadband policy, it is not yet a series of rules. The Association believes it can and must be improved. That is why this resolution encourages the FCC to make substantive changes to the National Broadband Plan so that it does not limit the future economic livelihood and social well being of rural consumers.

The resolution also encourages our Congressional delegation to work with the FCC to ensure it understands the importance of robust broadband deployment to rural North Dakota and how the current draft of the "Plan" needs to be dramatically altered to ensure quality broadband services are available throughout our State.

Members of the Association urge a "Do Pass" recommendation on House Concurrent Resolution 3022.

## ASSOCIATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVES www.ndatc.com

# INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE COMPANY TERRITORY IN NORTH DAKOTA





www.ndatc.com

## **ABSARAKA TELEPHONE COMPANY**

Absaraka, ND 58002 Mgr: Ann Faught

Phone: 701-896-3404

#### **BEK COMMUNICATIONS**

Website: www.bektel.com Phone: 701-475-2361 Mgr: Derrick Bulawa Steele, ND 58482

#### CONSOLIDATED TELCOM

Nebsite: www.ctctel.com Phone: 701-483-4000 Mgr: Paul Schuetzler Dickinson, ND 58602

## DAKOTA CENTRAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Carrington, ND 58421

Mgr: Keith Larson

Website: www.daktel.com Phone: 701-652-3184

#### DICKEY RURAL TELEPHONE

Ellendale, ND 58436 Mgr: Jeff Wilson

Phone: 701-344-5000

Website: www.drtel.net

## GRIGGS COUNTY TELEPHONE COMPANY

Cooperstown, ND 58425 Mgr: Ray Brown

Phone: 701-797-3301

Nebsite: www.mlgc.com

## NTER-COMMUNITY TELEPHONE COMPANY

Nome, ND 58062

Phone: 701-924-8815 Mgr: Keith Andersen

Website: www.ictc.com

## MIDSTATE TELEPHONE COMPANY

Mgr: Mark Wilhelmi Stanley, ND 58784

Website: www.midstatetel.com Phone: 701-628-2522

#### THE NORTH DAKOTA RURAL **TELEPHONE INDUSTRY**

- High Speed Internet in 275 North Dakota rural communities.
- Independent telcos serve 96 percent of North Dakota's geographic territory.
- Over \$1.2 billion investment in local telecom infrastructure.
- Over \$58 million in payroll for rural residents.
- Over 8,000 miles of fiber optic cable.
- City, state and federal taxes paid by rural telcos in 2009: \$16.4 million.
- employees in rural North Dakota 1100 highly trained and educated communities.

## MISSOURI VALLEY COMMUNICATIONS

Scobey, MT 59263

Mgr: Mike Kilgore

Website: www.nemontel.net Phone: 406-783-5654

## MOORE & LIBERTY TELEPHONE COMPANY

Enderlin, ND 58027 Mgr: Ray Brown

Website: www.mlgc.com Phone: 701-437-3300

NEMONT TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE Scobey, MT 59263

Phone: 406-783-5654 Mgr: Mike Kilgore

Website: www.nemontel.net

## NORTH DAKOTA TELEPHONE COMPANY

Devils Lake, ND 58301

Phone: 701-662-1100 Mgr: Dave Dircks

Website: www.gondtc.com

## NORTHWEST COMMUNICATIONS

Mgr: Dwight Schmitt Ray, ND 58849

Phone: 701-568-3331

Website: www.nccray.com

#### POLAR COMMUNICATIONS

Park River, ND 58270 Mgr: David Dunning

701-284-7221

Website: www.polarcomm.com

#### RED RIVER RURAL TELEPHONE

Abercrombie, ND 58001

Mgr. Jeff Olson

Phone: 701-553-8309 Website: www.rrt.net

#### RESERVATION TELEPHONE

Mgr: Royce Aslakson Parshall, ND 58770

Website: www.rtc.coop Phone: 701-862-3115

#### SRT COMMUNICATIONS

Mgr: Steve Lysne Minot, ND 58702

Phone: 701-858-1200

Website: www.srt.com

## UNITED TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE

Langdon, ND 58249 Mgr: Perry Oster

Website: www.utma.com Phone: 701-256-5156

## WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Hazen, ND 58545

Mgr: Mick Grosz

Website: www.westriv.com Phone: 701-748-2211



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#### HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 3022

#### SENATE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS COMMITTEE

MARCH 11, 2011

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Increasingly, applications that individuals use to enhance their productivity using broadband will be written for the higher and higher speeds proposed by Chairman Genachowski. The result will be that the newest, the latest, the greatest applications will not be compatible with networks that run at slower speeds, which will make rural areas of the nation permanent second-class citizens.

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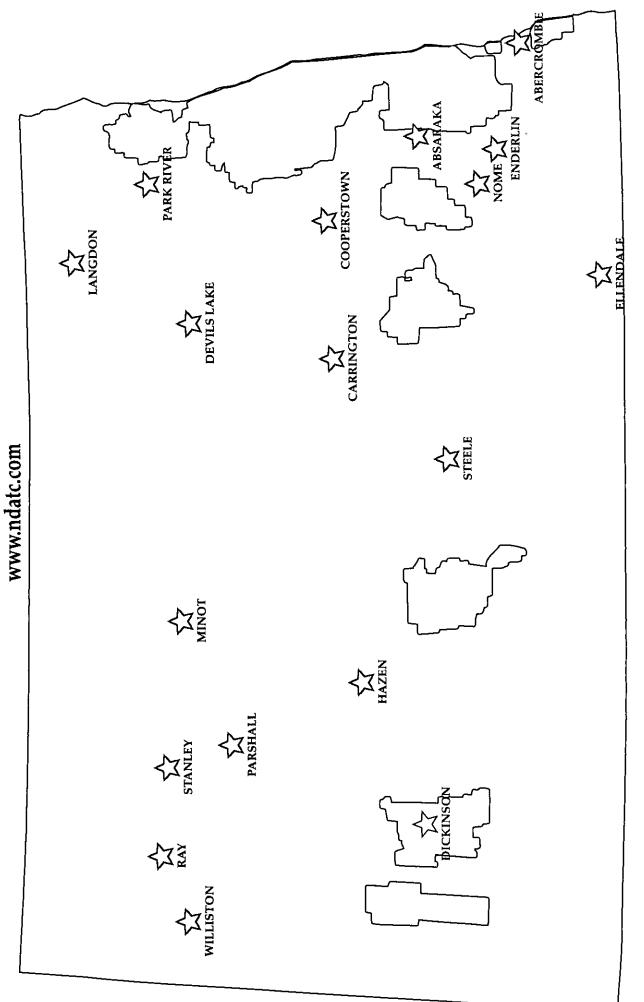
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## ASSOCIATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVES NORTH PAKOTA



# INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE COMPANY TERRITORY IN NORTH DAKOTA



# TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVES

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- 1100 highly trained and educated employees in rural North Dakota communities.

## MISSOURI VALLEY COMMUNICATIONS

Scobey, MT 59263 Mgr: Mike Kilgore

Website: www.nemontel.net Phone: 406-783-5654

MOORE & LIBERTY TELEPHONE COMPANY

Phone: 701-437-3300 Enderlin, ND 58027 Mgr: Ray Brown

Website: www.mlgc.com

NEMONT TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE

Phone: 406-783-5654 Scobey, MT 59263 Mgr: Mike Kilgore

Website: www.nemontel.net

## **NORTH DAKOTA TELEPHONE COMPANY**

Devils Lake, ND 58301 Mgr: Dave Dircks

Phone: 701-662-1100

Vebsite: www.gondtc.com

NORTHWEST COMMUNICATIONS

Phone: 701-568-3331 Mgr: Dwight Schmitt Ray, ND 58849

#### POLAR COMMUNICATIONS

Nebsite: www.nccray.com

Park River, ND 58270 Mgr: David Dunning

701-284-7221

Vebsite: www.polarcomm.com

#### RED RIVER RURAL TELEPHONE

Abercrombie, ND 58001 Mgr: Jeff Olson

Phone: 701-553-8309 Nebsite: www.rrt.net

#### RESERVATION TELEPHONE

Phone: 701-862-3115 Mgr: Royce Aslakson Parshall, ND 58770

Nebsite: www.rtc.coop

#### SRT COMMUNICATIONS

Mgr: Steve Lysne Minot, ND 58702

Phone: 701-858-1200 Nebsite: www.srt.com

#### UNITED TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE -angdon, ND 58249 Mgr: Perry Oster

Nebsite: www.utma.com Phone: 701-256-5156

## WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Hazen, ND 58545 Mgr: Mick Grosz

Nebsite: www.westriv.com Phone: 701-748-2211



# TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVES

www.ndatc.com

## ABSARAKA TELEPHONE COMPANY

Absaraka, ND 58002 Mgr: Ann Faught

Phone: 701-896-3404

#### BEK COMMUNICATIONS

Mgr: Derrick Bulawa Steele, ND 58482

Nebsite: www.bektel.com Phone: 701-475-2361

#### CONSOLIDATED TELCOM

Phone: 701-483-4000 Dickinson, ND 58602 Mgr. Paul Schuetzler

Website: www.ctctel.com

## DAKOTA CENTRAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Carrington, ND 58421 Mgr: Keith Larson

Nebsite: www.daktel.com Phone: 701-652-3184

#### DICKEY RURAL TELEPHONE

Ellendale, ND 58436 Mgr: Jeff Wilson

Website: www.drtel.net Phone: 701-344-5000

## GRIGGS COUNTY TELEPHONE, COMPANY

Cooperstown, ND 58425

Nebsite: www.mlgc.com Phone: 701-797-3301 Mgr: Ray Brown

#### NTER-COMMUNITY TELEPHONE COMPANY Nome, ND 58062

Phone: 701-924-8815 Mgr: Keith Andersen

Website: www.ictc.com

MIDSTATE TELEPHONE COMPANY

Mgr: Mark Wilhelmi Stanley, ND 58784

Nebsite: www.midstatetel.com Phone: 701-628-2522

#### THE NORTH DAKOTA RURAL **FELEPHONE INDUSTRY**

- · High Speed Internet in 275 North Dakota rural communities.
- Independent telcos serve 96 percent of North Dakota's geographic territory.
  - Over \$1.2 billion investment in local telecom infrastructure.
- Over \$58 million in payroll for rural residents.
- Over 8,000 miles of fiber optic cable.
- City, state and federal taxes paid by rural telcos in 2009: \$16.4 million.
- employees in rural North Dakota 1100 highly trained and educated communities.

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Phone: 701-748-2211 Mgr: Mick Grosz

Website: www.westriv.com

#### HCR 3022

Good afternoon, Chairman and committee members. For the record, my name is Julie Ellingson and I represent the North Dakota Stockmen's Association.

The nature of the livestock industry requires beef producers to live and work in rural, more remote areas. Yet, we have robust business models with customers from around the globe. In order to service those customers and conduct business effectively and competitively, we need reliable access to high-quality and affordable communication services.

The National Broadband Plan will provide inequitable service that runs counter to this goal and the resolution our organization passed at its recent convention on this topic. We support the substantive changes called for in this resolution and the establishment of a strong communication system that will help sustain a strong business climate for both urban and rural users.

For these reasons, we ask for your favorable consideration of this resolution.