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June 30, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-107, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey  
Appropriations Committee Chairman  
United States House of Representatives  
H-218, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer and Chairman Obey,

On behalf of the Telecommunications Industry Association, I am writing to convey our industry's concern about the inclusion of rescissions of "unobligated balances" from the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009" (PL 111-5) from the Department of Agriculture's "Distance Learning, Telemedicine and Broadband Program" and from the Department of Commerce's "Broadband Technology Opportunities Program" in the recently released "Amendment to the Senate Engrossed Amendment to the Text of H.R. 4899."

The Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service's (RUS) Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) was provided \$2.5 billion through the ARRA to offer grants, direct loans and loan grant combinations to help bring broadband services to rural unserved and underserved communities. While the first round of awards has been announced, the second round of applications is currently under review. Similarly, the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) is also in the process of reviewing the second round of applications for funding. ARRA provided \$4.7 billion to NTIA to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service and to develop and maintain broadband maps of every state.

With both of these programs on track to meet the statutory requirement to obligate all of the funds by the end of this fiscal year, it is alarming that a proposal would be made at this late stage to remove funding from these efforts. Hundreds of organizations, companies and communities across America have spent time and precious resources to apply for these awards based on the availability of funds. To remove \$602 million from these programs would be detrimental to the stated goal of the Recovery Act – job creation. Additionally, these rescissions would remove needed resources from the effort to bring broadband to millions of currently unserved and underserved Americans which will benefit these communities and the overall economy for years to come – goals which you have publicly supported and was a priority of the U.S. House in formulating the ARRA package.

The Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) represents the global information and communications technology (ICT) industry through standards development, advocacy, business opportunities, market intelligence and world-wide environmental regulatory analysis. Members'



products and services empower communications in every industry and market, including healthcare, education, security, public safety, transportation, government, the military, the environment and entertainment.

TIA's members recognize that we are in an time of extraordinary deficits and we believe strongly that the investment in broadband infrastructure will be beneficial to the economy today in the creation of jobs in communities throughout America, but also help create and sustain jobs into the future through connecting these communities and opening the door to new opportunities and growth. Thus, we respectfully request that you reconsider these proposed rescissions and remove them as a potential offset for this or as part of any other bill.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this issue.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Grant Seiffert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Grant Seiffert  
President