

October 14, 2009

Hon. Henry Waxman, Chairman  
Committee on Energy & Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Rick Boucher, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Communications,  
Technology & Internet  
2125 Rayburn House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Waxman and Boucher:

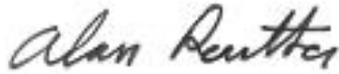
The CWA-UAW Legislative Alliance strongly supports the proposed "Broadband Affordability Act of 2009" (H.R. 3646), which was recently introduced by Representative Doris Matsui. On behalf of our over two million active and retired workers, we urge Members of your Subcommittee and full Committee to cosponsor this legislation and to give it prompt, favorable consideration.

This legislation directs the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish a program to provide low-income Americans living in rural and urban areas with assistance in subscribing to affordable broadband service. Specifically, it would expand the Universal Service Fund Lifeline Assistance Program to allow those funds to be used to offer discounted broadband service. Under this legislation, customers would receive a discount on their monthly broadband service bill. The bill directs the FCC to apply the same criteria it uses to determine eligibility for participation in the Lifeline telephone service program as the qualifying standard for low-income Americans to receive discounted broadband service.

Universal, affordable access to high-speed communications networks is as essential today as is access to voice communications. Enactment of H.R. 3646 would help to ensure that every American has access to all the promises of the information age. This would reduce the digital divide that currently excludes low income persons, including many minorities, from having access to broadband service. This legislation is especially important in light of the current economic climate, in which many hard working Americans simply cannot afford to pay up to \$60 a month to receive broadband service.

For all of the foregoing reasons, the CWA-UAW Legislative Alliance urges Members of your Subcommittee and full Committee to cosponsor the "Broadband Affordability Act of 2009" (H.R. 3646), and to give prompt, favorable consideration to this legislation. Thank you for considering our views on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan Reuther".

Alan Reuther  
Director  
CWA-UAW Alliance

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cc: Members, Committee on  
Energy & Commerce