

ROBERT J. WITTMAN
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RURAL BROADBAND CAUCUS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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June 19, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As our nation deals with the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans are doing their utmost to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus by utilizing telework, distance learning, and telehealth capabilities. The new realities and the certain upcoming new normal have left millions of rural Americans, who have inadequate or no connectivity to high-speed broadband, feeling abandoned and in frantic need of relief to compete in the 21st Century economy.

In order to address this heightened emergency in which rural Americans find themselves, I urge you to consider the effects that efforts to contain the spread of the virus are having on those living in rural communities who lack sufficient high-speed broadband access.

As House and Senate leadership negotiate further legislation regarding COVID-19, I strongly urge both chambers to prioritize the expeditious delivery of broadband to rural communities to ensure students have access to distance learning services and those who require it have access to dependable telehealth capabilities. Together we can ease the harsh circumstances that have plagued rural Americans living in unserved or underserved parts of the country and prevent the further inequities of the all too real digital-divide.

I applaud your leadership in past legislation dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and simply ask that Congressional leadership not forget rural Americans who are forced to face the realities of the digital divide as we transition to a post-pandemic America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Wittman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress