

ROBERT J. WITTMAN

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House of Representatives
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June 22, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

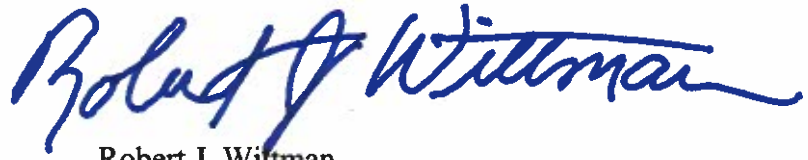
As our nation deals with the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans are doing their utmost to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus by utilizing telework, distance learning, and telehealth capabilities. The new realities and the certain upcoming new normal have left millions of rural 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.

Moreover, I thank you for your continued push to improve America's crumbling infrastructure. America has been hindered as a result of our nation's aging, deteriorating infrastructure for too long. Modernizing our nation's infrastructure will benefit every American, and it will make us safer, more resilient, and more financially stable. It will create well-paying jobs, increase productivity, hone our nation's competitive position, and ensure future economic success.

In the Information Age, the internet offers endless possibilities. Unfortunately, these possibilities are not afforded to many rural Americans. Our rural communities have been hindered in a greater capacity by the lack of broadband connectivity. Many of our rural communities' lack adequate internet security, limiting economic prosperity. The digital divide many rural Americans face hinders their efforts to compete in the 21st Century economy, as well as, access telework, distance learning, and telehealth services. Rural communities must have adequate broadband infrastructure to attract and retain businesses. An estimated 19 million Americans still lack access to high-speed broadband—and the vast majority live in rural communities and that is unacceptable.

With this in mind, I urge you to prioritize direct funding support for rural broadband deployment in a future infrastructure package to help narrow the digital divide and close the homework gap. I encourage the inclusion of connectivity investments in your infrastructure proposal. I remain committed to working with you to deliver the promise of broadband connectivity to rural America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Wittman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent horizontal line across the top of the letters.

Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress