

**The Honorable Anthony Brindisi**  
**Energy and Commerce Member Day Testimony**  
**Subcommittee on Communications & Technology**  
**July 25, 2019**  
**2123 Rayburn House Office Building**

Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Walden, Subcommittee Chairman Doyle and Ranking Member Latta, thank you for the opportunity to testify at today's Energy and Commerce Committee Member Day. I appreciate your strong leadership on these issues.

My largely rural district in Upstate New York stretches from Lake Ontario in the north all the way down to the Pennsylvania border in the south. So when I hear cable executives talk about "5G access" and "10-gigabit connections," I am left shaking my head. For many families in my area, basic internet access remains out of reach. Worst of all, I have heard from countless constituents who have seen their cable bills go up month after month as the service just gets worse and worse. I have heard stories from families who see their connections grind to a halt at home when they try to get online. And when they contact their cable company, they get no help – only excuses.

As I see it, there are three areas where Congress can do the most good when it comes to delivering high-speed internet access to rural America.

First, we need better data. Even the FCC agrees that the data they use to map homes with high-speed internet is woefully inadequate. We need better information from companies so we know exactly where federal investments are needed most. I want to thank the Committee for making this issue a top priority.

Second, we need to continue to expand programs which build out broadband access in rural areas. This includes maintaining the FCC Universal Service Fund programs and ensuring that each unique program receives the funding it requires. And as we continue to invest in these vital programs, we need strong oversight at the FCC to make sure internet service providers are fulfilling their obligations.

And that brings me to my third point: Accountability. These cable companies often operate as monopolies, leaving customers no choice but to overpay for subpar service. In New York, one cable company in particular failed to live up to the terms of its corporate merger agreement and had to be fined and threatened with expulsion from the state by our Public Service Commission. The first bill I introduced in Congress, the Transparency for Cable Consumers Act, would force companies like this to disclose information about their businesses to bring transparency and accountability to the market. By doing so, we can curb the worst monopoly practices and perhaps even help introduce real competition into the market.

I have been fortunate to work with many Members of this Committee – Republicans and Democrats – on these priorities this year. Expanding access to high-speed internet remains a task as large as rural electrification 100 years ago, and I look forward to continuing to work with this Committee to ensure every home in rural America is connected.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.