

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

September 14, 2015

The Honorable Stephen Roe Lewis
Governor
Gila River Indian Community
P.O. Box 97
Sacaton, AZ 85147

Dear Governor Lewis:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology on July 22, 2015, to testify at the hearing entitled "Promoting Broadband Infrastructure Investment."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Monday, September 28, 2015. Your responses should be mailed to Greg Watson, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to Greg.Watson@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Greg Walden
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

cc: Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology

Attachment

Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Greg Walden

1. Governor Lewis, how do we improve access to technical expertise in the native American community to promote deployment in the same way the Gila River Community has? Does BIA or ONAP assist in providing such technical expertise or training?
2. While the FCC hasn't raised the definition of broadband to 25 Mbps yet for CAF grants, it may be heading there. Wouldn't raising that definition to require higher speed service both raise the overall costs of deployment? Would the higher cost of deployment reduce the amount available for tribal deployment and also make tribal deployment, which is already very high-cost due to low population density, seem even more expensive?

The Honorable Ben Ray Lujan

Governor Lewis, it is always great to see you and I want to thank you for the kind words in your testimony.

As you said, when it comes to broadband access, tribal communities have real needs and face real challenges. I firmly believe that our Committee must act to provide tribal communities with access to next generation communication services.

I hope that the upcoming GAO report - which I was proud to request with Ranking Members Eshoo and Pallone - will provide us with further guidance on how we can overcome these challenges together.

I am committed to ensuring that tribes have a seat at the table at the Federal Communications Commission, which is why I champion the Office of Native Affairs and Policy.

1. Can you discuss what ONAP has meant to Gila River and other tribal communities? And can you speak to the breadth of their outreach?
2. Previously, I have pushed to make ONAP a permanent office at the FCC. Do you believe that this would be beneficial?
3. Does ONAP have the resources and support it needs to complete its mission? Should ONAP and the FCC be doing more to connect tribal communities?

The FCC is currently working to reform the universal service mechanism that supports rate-of-return carriers' deployment and maintenance of broadband services.

Earlier this year, I sent a letter to the FCC expressing concern that they did not initially consult tribal stakeholders. Though I know that the FCC has since engaged, tribal consultation must not be an afterthought - especially since this effort represents an opportunity to expand access to broadband.

4. Governor Lewis, in your testimony, you mention that the National Tribal Telecommunications Association has submitted a proposal to the FCC to create a Tribal Broadband Factor. Can you talk more about this proposal and can you discuss why you believe it is needed?