

October 6, 2021

The Honorable Mike Doyle
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
270 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Latta
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Doyle and Ranking Member Latta:

Thank you for holding this week's legislative hearing on several bills that are critical to maintaining our nation's communications networks. USTelecom submits this letter for the record in support of H.R. 5400, the Preventing Disruptions to Universal Service Funds Act.

In 2004, with input from the Office of Management and Budget, the Federal Communications Commission concluded that the Universal Service Fund was subject to the Antideficiency Act. The result of this ruling would have effectively forced the Universal Service Administration Company to delay the funding of critical programs, including the High-Cost Fund, which helps support the expansion and maintenance of rural broadband networks and the E-Rate fund, which helps cover the cost of broadband for schools and libraries.

Fortunately, Congress has intervened every year since 2004 and passed legislative language exempting the Universal Service Fund from being subject to the Antideficiency Act. H.R. 5400 would provide a three-year exemption from the provisions of the Act and, in turn, give a level of certainty to Universal Service recipients, including schools and libraries, and ensure that disbursements will not be delayed.

We appreciate your leadership on these issues and urge the Committee to continue its support of American connectivity by passing H.R. 5400.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Spalter