

**United States House of Representatives
Tim Donovan
President and CEO
Competitive Carriers Association
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Wednesday, March 5, 2025**

Attachment —Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Greg Landsman

1. Mr. Donovan, I am concerned that if the court sides with conservative special interests on USF, we will lose the \$8 billion Universal Service Fund that helps people get online. Without this investment in broadband access, what will happen to hospitals, libraries, and schools in districts like mine who sometimes rely on this support?

USF is critical for providing connectivity to hard-to-reach and lower income communities, so that all Americans can participate in our economy, learn, access emergency services, and stay in touch with family and friends. Many of CCA's members rely on USF support, combined with private capital, to deploy and maintain broadband infrastructure in areas that are otherwise uneconomical to serve. They already face challenges maintaining mobile connectivity in certain areas while High Cost USF support has been capped and declining since 2008.

If the Supreme Court were to find that the USF program is unconstitutional, many rural carriers, hospitals, libraries, schools, and other anchor institutions will be forced to go dark across rural and underserved parts of this country. These decisions are agonizing for CCA companies, whose employees proudly provide these services to their neighbors and community. The impacts will be sudden and severe – I have spoken with several CCA members that rely on USF that have already run cash flow forecasts if USF support were to end, and the consequences are devastating for the carriers and the communities they serve.

2. Mr. Donovan, your members make good use of USF programs to help people access broadband. We agree that USF is vital. What are some things Congress can do to ensure the long term success of USF?

The most urgent thing Congress can do to ensure the success of USF if the Supreme Court finds any constitutional issues with the program is to quickly address and resolve any concerns.

Simultaneously, CCA also encourages Congress to consider legislation to sustain USF going forward. This includes addressing the contributions base so that all stakeholders that benefit from services supported by USF contribute. Congress should also reaffirm that USF requires sufficient and predictable support to preserve legacy investments, and ensure that networks and towers stay operational. Otherwise these facilities that were built using USF support will be stranded and coverage in rural areas will shrink. Congress can also support efforts to update the 5G Fund to ensure that it is a success, including basing any transition away from legacy support on the

availability of ongoing operational support, establishing service and speed eligibility thresholds so they match consumer expectations, and increasing funding based on anticipated needs to complete the work. Eligibility for the 5G Fund and other programs must be determined using reliable coverage data. As Congress evaluates USF and other Federal broadband support programs, like NTIA's BEAD and USDA's ReConnect, it should consider ways to synchronize different programs and promote interagency coordination to enhance effectiveness of deployment efforts, and maximize limited USF resources.