

State of South Dakota

EIGHTY-SIXTH SESSION
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2011

753S0380

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1003

Introduced by: Representatives Gosch, Cronin, Hunhoff (Bernie), Hunt, Lust, and Rausch
and Senators Brown, Frerichs, Gray, and Olson (Russell)

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Requesting the Federal Communications Commission to
2 make substantive changes to the National Broadband Plan.

3 WHEREAS, South Dakotans living in rural areas of the country deserve and expect the
4 same high-quality, affordable communications services that are available to their urban
5 neighbors; and

6 WHEREAS, main street businesses, as well as farmers and ranchers compete in a global
7 marketplace and depend on affordable access to broadband services to market and sell their
8 products around the world; and

9 WHEREAS, children living in rural America should have the same educational
10 opportunities as their urban counterparts and high-speed internet access is absolutely necessary
11 to allow these students opportunities for advanced learning through distance education; and

12 WHEREAS, residents living in rural areas face unique health care challenges because of the
13 distances that must be traveled to seek basic and advanced medical care and telemedicine
14 delivered via broadband networks can improve the health of rural residents by reducing the time
15 and travel needed for high-quality healthcare; and



1 WHEREAS, many rural areas encounter significant challenges in pursuing and sustaining
2 economic development plans that bring quality, higher paying jobs to their communities, and
3 insufficient robust broadband speeds will further hamper the economic development needs of
4 many rural communities; and

5 WHEREAS, communications providers that serve South Dakota's small towns and rural
6 areas have done an outstanding job of ensuring their consumers have access to affordable,
7 reliable broadband services with assistance from the federal Universal Service Fund and the
8 Rural Utilities Service loan and grant programs; and

9 WHEREAS, contrary to the success many South Dakota communications providers have
10 had in deploying broadband, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is embarking on
11 a National Broadband Plan that will negatively impact the ability of rural Americans to realize
12 the true benefits of access to robust broadband speeds by limiting support to four megabits per
13 second in rural, high-cost areas of the country, while calling for one hundred million urban
14 homes to have access to broadband speeds at one hundred megabits per second by 2020; and

15 WHEREAS, the National Broadband Plan will create a digital divide between rural and
16 urban consumers that runs counter to the federal policy of universal service which ensures
17 access to comparable communications services at roughly similar costs regardless of the
18 location of the consumer:

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives of the Eighty-
20 sixth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the Senate concurring therein, that the
21 Legislature challenges the Federal Communications Commission to make substantive changes
22 to the National Broadband Plan so that the plan will not limit the future economic livelihood and
23 social well being of rural consumers; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Legislature encourages Senator Tim

1 Johnson, Senator John Thune, and Representative Kristi Noem to work with the FCC to ensure
2 the commissioners understand the importance of robust broadband deployment to rural America
3 and how the current draft of the National Broadband Plan needs to be dramatically altered to
4 ensure quality broadband services is available throughout the country.