

## HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1003

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

broadband speeds at one hundred megabits per second by 2020; and

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

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Legislature encourages Senator Tim Johnson, Senator John Thune, and Representative Kristi Noem to work with the FCC to ensure the commissioners understand the importance of robust broadband deployment to rural America and how the current draft of the National Broadband Plan needs to be dramatically altered to ensure quality broadband services are available throughout the country.

Adopted by the House of Representatives,  
Concurred in by the Senate,

February 1, 2011  
February 3, 2011

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Val Rausch  
Speaker of the House

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Karen Gerdes  
Chief Clerk of the House

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Matt Michels  
President of the Senate

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Trudy Evenstad  
Secretary of the Senate