



American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Broadband Initiatives, NRTC, Hughes Network Systems, WildBlue Communications and Intelsat Corporation to NTIA and RUS on April 13, 2009

On April 13, 2009, the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC), Hughes Network Systems, WildBlue Communications and Intelsat Corporation filed comments in response to the Joint Request for Information (RFI) issued by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

The response urges NTIA and RUS to recognize that “different technological solutions are more suitable for different areas of the country,” that priority should be given to unserved areas and that “the national broadband policy should recognize that . . . highly rural areas in the United States have the lowest broadband availability and adoption rates.”

In addition, the response agrees that the Federal Communications Commission’s definition of “broadband” as a service offering speeds of 768 kilobits per second (kbps) in at least one direction is “an acceptable starting point” but that consumers “should have the choice to select a more economical service” at slower speeds, if available. The submitters argue that forcing a “one-size-fits-all definition of broadband with artificially high speed thresholds” could lead to an unreasonably high cost to consumers or limit deployment in areas that need broadband access most.