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cc

bcc

Subject Protecting Rural Broadband



**Rural Ontario
Municipal Association**

Dear Colleagues:

Protecting Rural Broadband

Industry Canada has proposed changes that would seriously affect current rural internet service . The process involves reclassifying vast rural areas as "urban" and for all "urban" licenses to be taken away from rural internet service providers even though licenses are in use providing service to people today in rural Ontario. That spectrum would be allocated to cellular phone companies for future use not yet developed.

In effect, this policy change would see many rural communities across Ontario and Canada lose their existing high speed internet service. In our view, this short sighted proposal appears only to benefit the major telecommunication companies and is contrary to the Federal government's priority of providing high speed internet service to rural communities throughout Canada . For rural communities, access to high speed internet services allows them to compete globally . It also enhances economic returns for local businesses as well as attracts businesses and residents to the community .

The ROMA Board feels that this matter deserves the attention of rural communities across the province and urges municipal governments to raise this matter in submissions to Industry Canada . A draft mock-up of a letter is available for your use on the ROMA website to help in crafting your message to the Federal government. Additional information on this matter is also posted on the ROMA website. The turnaround time on these submissions is short. Comments **are due to Industry Canada electronically by Wednesday , October 8th**. If your Council has an existing position on access to rural high speed internet , we urge you to send that along as well.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this important issue that affects all rural communities across Canada.

Sincerely,

Ron Eddy
ROMA Chair

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