

Good Afternoon Representative Lively.

My name is Barb Iverson from Woodburn Oregon. I own Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm and am chair of Monitor Telecom, a small cooperative telco in my rural community.

I am in support of HB 2184 & 2173.

Six years ago, our local Telco looked at the proposed funding models and decided to make the bold move to install fiber in 100% of our area. We realized where the industry was going and were concerned about reimbursements for our project due to the reliance on land line funding only. It was a decision we are glad we made and now have fiber to 100% of our service area thanks to the Universal Service Fund and the OUS funding we received.

My business is dependent on high speed internet. Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm attracts visitors from all over the country and even sees international guests. Our dependable, high speed internet service has been vital to our outreach and marketing for our annual tulip festival.

But beyond our marketing, high speed internet has been vital in other ways. Wireless credit card terminals for merchant services attached to secure Wi-Fi. Ticketing as we have customers that buy passes online and are redeemed with a scanner. Security Cameras, automatic locks, smart thermostats and lighting, and the list continues to grow, not only for my business but for my rural home as well. Even on our farm, the need for remote diagnostics with much of the new technology for our tractors is of extreme importance.

On my farm, we are fortunate enough to have the speed we need but there are many areas of the state, both rural and urban that lack this infrastructure. We have had many discussions at our telco board meetings about the reduction in funding due to the reliance on the pool supported solely by land lines. Even the USF fund struggles with funding. We have always thought it odd that the Connect America initiative and rural broadband plan was only reliant on landlines as well, especially when fiber is what is needed to execute this plan. With dedicated funding available, the opportunities are incredible for the rural community.

Thank you,

Barb Iverson
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