



The Honorable Fred Upton
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Upton:

EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association of over 2,000 colleges and universities, wishes to commend you on introducing the "Community Broadband Act of 2007" (H.R.3281).

Our members oppose any state or federal policy that would impede local government efforts from providing broadband services and the vital applications that run over the Internet to its citizens. In that spirit, we believe your bill will help facilitate American's access to affordable, high-speed Internet and the tools essential for collaboration, learning, and research and should be signed into law before Congress adjourns this session.

In 2006, a survey conducted by the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR) found the integration of information technology in the classroom, while growing exponentially, has resulted in a "technology underclass" on campus. The ECAR survey also discovered that students who use dial-up, narrowband connections at home found less satisfaction with IT's impact and potency in their academic lives. This "underclass" is far less likely to possess advanced skills in IT, skills essential for competing in today's global marketplace.

The President, the Congress, and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have all identified as a national priority universal, affordable access to broadband technology. The President had set a goal of 2007 for universal access in the United States, a goal which will not be met this year and cannot be met in the near future without the contributions of local community networks.

EDUCAUSE strongly believes the "Community Broadband Act of 2007" helps create the proper environment for enabling this national broadband vision and encourages your colleagues to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

Mark Luker
Vice President, EDUCAUSE