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## **National Broadband Plan Should Aim to Accelerate Deployment of Mobile Broadband and Promote Competition**

**Washington, DC** – Today Federal Communications Committee (FCC) Chairman Julius Genachowski outlined the primary spectrum goals of the National Broadband Plan (NBP), which is scheduled to be delivered to Congress on March 17, 2010. The Rural Cellular Association (RCA) commends the Chairman in his call for the acceleration in the broad deployment of mobile broadband and the promotion of competition, and therefore urges the FCC to address issues such as data roaming and handset exclusivity that encourage competition within the marketplace.

As today's consumers expect mobile data connectivity no matter where they go, it is crucial that the FCC require wireless carriers to reach non-discriminatory data roaming agreements. Data roaming is especially important to rural and regional carriers with smaller network coverage, as they may bear substantial financial burdens if they are unable to reach reasonable terms of agreement with larger carriers in the industry. Additionally, small carriers are often denied access to the latest, high-tech mobile devices because the devices are tied up in exclusivity agreements with the larger carriers, and the FCC should take a closer look at exclusivity arrangements, as exclusive deals do not promote innovation or competition.

RCA also commends Chairman Genachowski's announcement that the NBP will aim to develop the 700 MHz public safety broadband network in order to achieve interoperability. RCA encourages the FCC to act on behalf of consumers by ensuring that 700 MHz mobile equipment is capable of operating on all paired commercial 700 MHz frequency blocks. Speaking on the Chairman's announcement, RCA's CEO Steven K. Berry noted, "It is crucial for the deployment of mobile broadband in rural and regional areas that additional spectrum is made available, however it is just as important that small carriers are able to fully utilize the 700 MHz spectrum they have already purchased and that future spectrum offerings are appropriately sized to be sold to carriers who will fully build out and serve the licensed areas."

### **About RCA**

RCA is the nation's leading association for wireless providers serving rural areas of the United States. The licensed service area of RCA's nearly 100 members covers more than 80 percent of the nation.

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Chairman Genachowski's full speech can be found [here](#).