



The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

July 7, 2010

Dear Mr. President:

The Southern New Jersey Development Council (SNJDC) is a non-profit organization that works to create a better economic environment in the region on behalf of its membership and the southern eight counties of New Jersey. The SNJDC also functions as a government affairs liaison and economic development advocate.

Our membership is comprised of key leaders and decision-makers from the public and private sectors and we represent organizations among 30 broad business types, including casino/gaming industry development, education, engineers, the health care industry, transportation, and tourism. SNJDC is proud to contribute to our region's growth by working cooperatively with the region's county economic development directors in serving as Southern New Jersey's "Unified Voice for Progress."

As an organization that seeks to stimulate economic growth in our region, we were encouraged by the Administration's response to the economic downturn, particularly your support for universal broadband and your recognition of its potential to enable twenty-first solutions to some of our nation's biggest challenges. During a recent speech, you said, "we're going to make the investments to make sure we are first in the future – not just in the past. That's got to be our priority. That's why we're bringing high-speed Internet to tens of thousands of homes, and businesses and hospitals and schools."

We acknowledge the great work your administration and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration has done to facilitate broadband grants, but we also know that the federal government does not have the financial resources to connect our entire country. The majority of funding must come from the private sector; this is why we are extremely apprehensive about the FCC's broadband reclassification efforts.

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If the FCC decides to apply outdated-Title II regulations to the continually evolving broadband network, it could pose drastic consequences for private sector investment in broadband, derailing future innovation. There are substantial legal uncertainties with the FCC's proposal, and private companies are unlikely to approve billion-dollar investments until the courts determine the legality of reclassification.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Z. Asselta, President
The Southern New Jersey Development Council

Cc: The Honorable Valerie B. Jarrett, Senior Advisor and Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement

The Honorable Lawrence H. Summers, Director of the National Economic Council and Assistant to the President for Economic Policy