

**(Washington, D.C.)**--In a letter cosigned by 61 Members of the House, U.S. Representatives Rick Boucher (D-VA) and Lee Terry (R-NE) urged the FCC today to delay implementing changes to the access charge and universal service regimes until the draft of the proposed order has been made available for public comment. Citing the fundamental and sweeping nature of the proposed changes, Boucher and Terry emphasized the need for understanding of the effect of the changes by members of Congress and the public alike.

**"According to news reports and staff briefings, the proposal makes sweeping changes to intercarrier compensation and universal service which in many instances will raise subscribers' telephone rates and hinder broadband deployment. □ Some have described the proposal as a broad restructuring of the telecommunications industry,"** Boucher and Terry stated in the letter.

**"With so much at stake, we are concerned that the Commission has not released the full proposal for public review and comment.□ The public deserves the opportunity to provide fully informed comments, and the Commission stands to gain by understanding the positions of all parties interested in its potentially sweeping decision.□ Only with a fully developed record on the proposal currently under consideration can the Commission make an educated decision that truly serves the public interest,"** the letter continues.

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**"While we share the Commission's interest in making much needed changes to the universal service fund, elected and accountable representatives in Congress should properly design the reform.□ With appropriate legislation, the Commission will be equipped with the tools and guidance necessary to adopt regulations pursuant to the statutory reform that best serve the public interest,"**

**"We recognize that the Commission must justify its intercarrier compensation rules for ISP-bound traffic by November 5 pursuant to D.C. Circuit Court remand and expect the Commission to take action on that specific matter on November 4... Since the proposal now being considered by the Commission is far more comprehensive than these more**

**narrow objectives, it is essential that you place the proposal before the public for review and comment before acting,"** Boucher and Terry concluded.

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