



January 23, 2013

(Via e-mail)

The Honorable Rosie Berger, Chairwoman
House Corporations, Elections & Political Subdivisions Committee
Wyoming Legislature
213 State Capitol
Cheyenne, WY 82002

RE: HB0018

Dear Chairwoman Berger:

The Voice on the Net (VON) Coalition¹, which represents the nation's leading companies developing and delivering voice innovations over the Internet, writes to express its thanks for your efforts concerning HB 0018. In particular, we appreciate your proposal to ensure that Internet Protocol-enabled services are not subject to regulation as telecommunications services.

IP communications can be a force for increased competition, a platform for innovation, a driver for broadband deployment and a vehicle for continued economic growth. In fact, with the right policies, IP communications competition can save Wyoming consumers millions of dollars annually – putting real money back into consumers' pockets when they really need it. Further, by harnessing IP communications as a broadband driver (since, for example, VoIP calls are carried over broadband connections), increased broadband adoption in Wyoming will create jobs as the country works its way out of these difficult economic times.

To help ensure that Wyoming consumers can benefit from these transformative Internet Protocol enabled services, HB0018 clarifies that Internet Protocol-enabled services are not telecommunication or subject to state regulation. The bill maintains the status quo regarding other statutory provisions, including any currently applicable fees or assessments that may apply to Internet Protocol enabled services.

By adopting these provisions, Wyoming would join federal policymakers and more than 25 states that have recognized that to unleash the vast benefits that Internet Protocol enabled services can deliver, the service should not be subject to a potential patchwork of conflicting state regulatory models. These provisions are particularly important for consumers living in rural Wyoming who may not yet enjoy the benefits of broadband and voice competition.

¹The Voice on the Net or VON Coalition consists of leading VoIP companies, on the cutting edge of developing and delivering voice innovations over the Internet. The coalition, which includes AT&T, Broadvox, BT, Cloud Communications Alliance, Google, iBasis, Microsoft, Nextiva, Skype, Vonage and Yahoo!, works to advance regulatory policies that enable Americans to take advantage of the full promise and potential of VoIP. The Coalition believes that with the right public policies, Internet based voice advances can make talking more affordable, businesses more productive, jobs more plentiful, the Internet more valuable, and Americans more safe and secure. Since its inception, the VON Coalition has promoted pragmatic policy choices for unleashing VoIP's potential. <http://www.von.org>



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Rather than adopting state-specific rules for VoIP, government leaders in states like California, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, Utah, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin have all taken steps to prevent state regulation of IP communications in order to boost broadband deployment, make communications services more affordable, and harness Internet Protocol enabled services vast potential for important public policy goals. We encourage you to follow suit and push for the passage of HB0018.

Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

The VON Coalition

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