



C O N S U L T I N G

For Immediate Release

September 1, 2016

Contact: Jeff Smith 503 612-4409

jsmith@gvnw.com

GVNW APPLAUDS ALASKA INFRASTRUCTURE FUND PLAN

Tualatin, OR (September 1, 2016) – GVNW Consulting applauds the **FCC’s bipartisan action** in adopting the **Alaska Infrastructure Fund Plan (AIF)** on August 23, 2016. This Order, released by the FCC on August 31, 2016, is a balanced and forward-looking universal service support structure for Alaska as it is focused on broadband (BB) and targets the support to Alaska’s rural areas where broadband service is needed the most. In terms of metrics, the AIF plan increases the number of rural locations which may receive fixed BB at 10 Mbps/1 Mbps (10/1) to 90% of the locations in remote Alaska, up from 60%. This translates to reducing the number of rural Alaska locations without 10/1 Mbps service from 49,000 to less than 13,000.

With respect to the mobile service platform, the Alaska Plan deploys 4G LTE (or better) to at least 85% of the Alaska population, up from the low level of 9%. The Alaska Plan also provides support to bring mobile broadband to communities that currently have no wireless service at all. This is all accomplished under an AIF paradigm that includes stringent accountability that includes performance targets and penalties for non-performance.

This bipartisan majority recognized the unique operating environment present in the state of Alaska. Chairman Wheeler challenged the carriers in Alaska to develop a consensus solution and they delivered. Commissioner Rosenworcel recognizes the tremendous challenge faced in Alaska with her yes vote. Republican Commissioner O’Rielly joined the majority and noted in his statement that: *“Having traveled throughout much of Alaska in both my current and former capacities, I know firsthand that Alaska is unique compared to the ‘lower 48’ states. The sheer size and uncompromising terrain leave many communities and villages isolated. . .the weather challenges, which result in substantially shortened construction and repair seasons. . .*

make serving the sparsely populated rural and isolated areas very complicated and expensive. In fact, the costs to deploy broadband under these circumstances are substantial, and have been well-documented in the record. . . In short, much of Alaska is a remote area unto itself. . . More importantly, I look forward to carriers in Alaska meeting their commitments to expand broadband to reach a greater portion of its population.”

GVNW notes that the biggest winners in this policy decision are the residents in rural Alaska. We commend the Alaska Telephone Association and its members who led the effort to make this happen.

GVNW Consulting is one of the leading telecommunications-consulting firms in the nation specializing in applications to enhance the delivery of telecommunications products and services to rural areas. Established in 1970, GVNW currently serves over 200 client companies around the world, both incumbent and competitive, with the majority consisting of smaller companies located in high cost rural or insular areas. Please visit www.GVNW.com for more information.

###