Referring E-Rate Proposal to Joint Board is 'Exactly' What Congress Intended: NARUC

WASHINGTON—The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners issued the following statements in response to a bicameral letter from House and Senate leaders urging the Federal Communications Commission to refer any proposed expansion of the E-Rate program to the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service:

“Congress created the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service as a means for the Federal Communications Commission to work collaboratively with their State colleagues. As this letter makes clear, referring such questions to the Joint Board is exactly what Congress intended. We genuinely appreciate the support from these congressional leaders. State regulators share the FCC’s belief that today’s students need access to adequate broadband to compete in the global economy. The E-Rate program has done much to connect our nation’s schools and libraries to the Internet. If reformed properly it can improve upon this effort to bring high-speed broadband to all of America’s classrooms.”
--NARUC President Colette D. Honorable of Arkansas

“The Universal Service program is a responsibility shared by federal and State regulators. States have valuable insight on local markets and the deployment and availability of broadband in their borders. Seeking the insight of the USF Joint Board can only improve the end product and we support a referral to the USF Joint Board.”
--NARUC Committee on Telecommunications Chair Chris Nelson of South Dakota

NARUC is a non-profit organization founded in 1889 whose members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of State public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government.

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