



## NORTH AMERICAN EQUIPMENT DEALERS ASSOCIATION

Serving Farm, Industrial and Outdoor Power Dealers

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As a national organization that represents 5,000 farm, industrial and outdoor power equipment dealers, the North American Equipment Dealers Association (NAEDA) believes rural development is good for the United States. One way to enhance rural development is to put Web-based information and broadband access on par with that available to suburban and urban residents, make it more affordable and readily available to people living in rural areas. Proposed rules changes that accelerate the deployment of broadband service to rural areas of the country are supported by NAEDA.

Currently, equipment dealers account for more than 100,000 jobs in the U.S., most of which are located in rural areas. NAEDA has identified that there is an increasing shortage of skilled employees to fill well-compensated positions at these dealerships, a situation caused in part by the draw-off of the employee talent pool in rural areas as residents migrate from rural areas to more densely populated areas and where lifestyle-related goods and services are more readily available. One of those "goods and services" that reduces the labor pool is broadband access. By making affordable, readily available broadband access available, a negative condition in rural areas can be removed and there will be one less reason for rural residents to "move to the city." NAEDA favors government actions that stabilize the rural population base and which simultaneously protects agricultural equipment dealers', their customers and their employee pool base.

Ultimately, affordable and readily available broadband access in rural areas is good for everyone. The U.S. is an information society and those deprived of information access are at a great competitive disadvantage in recruiting and retaining qualified employees. Proposed rules that accelerate the deployment of broadband service to rural areas means rural residents will enjoy the same opportunities as their city cousins.

For all these reasons, NAEDA favors the proposed rules that bring affordable and readily available broadband access to rural areas.

Sincerely,

Michael Williams  
Vice President Government Relations