



June 25, 2019

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to VOTE YES on the amendment cosponsored by Reps. Pocan, Clyburn, Bustos, and Butterfield to the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act (H.R. 3351). The amendment prohibits the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) from using funds to advance a proposed rule that would harm beneficiaries of the E-Rate Program, especially in rural America. Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 116th Congress.

Proposed changes hurt students

- The FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, published in the [June 13 Federal Register](#), would establish an overall cap on the Universal Service Fund (USF); it also merges and sub-caps funding for the E-Rate and Rural Health Care Programs.
- NEA strongly opposes the proposed rule because it would pit the E-Rate and Rural Health Care Programs against one another, leading them to compete for funds—not what Congress intended when it passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that established them as separate programs with distinct purposes.
- The brunt of the burden of the proposed changes would be borne by the students in our classrooms who would lose internet access due to loss of E-Rate support.
- The students and communities most dependent on E-Rate would be hurt the most by the FCC's proposed caps and sub-caps, widening the digital divide.

E-Rate is a program that works

- E-Rate has enjoyed broad bipartisan support since its creation in 1998.
- In every congressional district, the program has succeeded in connecting nearly 100 percent of schools and public libraries to the internet.
- Today, E-Rate ensures schools stay connected with high-speed broadband sufficient to provide unfettered access to information and services critical to 21st century teaching and learning.

For all these reasons, we strongly urge you to VOTE YES on the amendment when it comes to the floor.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association

Attachment: Education and Library Networks Coalition (EdLiNC) response, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Universal Service Contribution Methodology (WC Docket No. 06-122)