

1310-01

Subject: FW: Prioritization of Rural Connectivity Across Canada

From: Jennifer Lastiwka [<mailto:Jennifer.Lastiwka@telus.com>] **On Behalf Of** Shaye Draper
Sent: September 9, 2020 3:07 PM
To: Shaye Draper <Shaye.Draper@telus.com>
Subject: Prioritization of Rural Connectivity Across Canada
Importance: High



Prioritization of Rural Connectivity Across Canada

General Manager Shaye Draper, member of the TELUS team

September 9, 2020

Good afternoon,

As a follow up to the update I sent earlier today, I'm reaching out to gauge your interest in sending a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to request that his government prioritizes rural connectivity in the upcoming Speech from the Throne on September 23. Municipalities of all sizes play a role in representing rural and remote communities and know too well the essential role connectivity infrastructure plays in the daily lives of Canadians.

COVID-19 has reinforced the importance of access to high speed internet and wireless services not only to stay in touch with loved ones, but to enable telecommuting, virtual health care services, and remote learning. While many Canadians and businesses have been able to adapt to this new reality, there are still too many rural Canadians that are being left behind.

That is why we need your help to urge the Government of Canada to prioritize policies that encourage private sector investment in connectivity for rural and remote communities, including a new approach to spectrum policy.

To assist, we've taken the liberty of providing a proposed draft letter (**attached**) to the Prime Minister, that can be customized as you see fit.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

The logo for Shaye, featuring the name in a stylized, handwritten script font.

Shaye Draper

General Manager, Customer Solutions Delivery
TELUS

T 250 388 8300 | M 250 886 2013

Distributed to all AB & BC municipalities, RDs UBCM and AUMA

September XX, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

By email: pm@pm.gc.ca

CC: Chrystia.Freeland@canada.ca (Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Finance)

CC: ISI.minister-ministre.ISI@canada.ca (Hon. Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry)

CC: Alyx.holland@pmo-cpm.gc.ca; ryan.dunn@canada.ca; elder.marques@canada.ca;
jeremy.broadhurst@dpmo-cvpm.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of [INSERT NAME OF MUNICIPALITY], I am writing to you to raise the urgent need for increased rural connectivity, and to ask that you **prioritize rural connectivity in the upcoming Speech from the Throne** on September 23. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the essential role connectivity services play in the daily lives of Canadians, not only to stay in touch with loved ones, but to telecommute, access virtual health care services, and enable remote learning. While many Canadians and businesses have been able to adapt to the new reality we find ourselves in, there are still too many rural Canadians that are being left behind.

As you prepare to lay out the Government of Canada's priorities in the Speech from the Throne, we urge you to prioritize policies that **encourage private sector investment in connectivity for rural and remote communities**. The need for new or improved broadband connectivity in [MUNICIPALITY], and communities like ours, is urgent.

To deliver better connectivity to our communities – and all of rural Canada – we ask that the federal government encourage rural network investment and deployment by:

1. **Expediting the 3500 MHz and 3800 MHz spectrum auctions** so that this spectrum can be put to use for all Canadians, sooner;
2. Imposing meaningful deployment conditions across accelerated timelines to all spectrum holders. For example, a **“use it or lose it” spectrum policy** that requires greater rural deployment within five years of a license grant, where failure to build results in forfeiture of that license;
3. **Ending the use of spectrum set asides**, particularly for rural areas, as set-aside eligible telecoms companies do not have a track record of deploying in rural Canada, and that spectrum goes unused; and
4. Continuing to invest in rural connectivity programs by launching the Universal Broadband Fund, supporting the CRTC Broadband Fund, and identifying opportunities to match or **coordinate funding programs with the provinces**.

We can no longer afford delays to the roll out of wireless connectivity. We hope that you will include rural connectivity as a key priority in the Speech from the Throne. We ask that these commitments be reflected in new ministerial mandate letters, reflecting your government's commitment to **encourage private sector investment in connectivity for [INSERT NAME OF MUNICIPALITY]**, and all of rural Canada.

I look forward to hearing from you on how your government is going to prioritize rural connectivity to ensure equal access for all Canadians to reliable wireless services and high speed internet.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME]