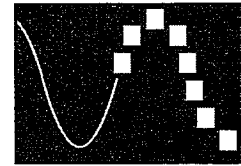


December 9, 2009



The VON Coalition

The Honorable Christopher Widener  
Chairman, Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee  
Ohio Senate  
Statehouse  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Widener:

The Voice on the Net Coalition is a trade association made up of the nation's leading companies<sup>1</sup> that are developing and delivering Internet Protocol-enabled applications, including Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), to consumers, businesses and government agencies throughout the United States. We write today to encourage you and your colleagues in the Ohio Senate to resist the erection of state regulatory barriers that could stall the technological advancements that VoIP can deliver.

VoIP can be a force for increased competition, a platform for innovation, a driver of broadband deployment and an enabler of economic growth. With continued advancement, VoIP driven competition has the potential to save consumers more than \$100 billion over the next 5 years. For businesses, VoIP is lowering costs, increasing mobility, enabling collaboration, integrating voice and data in entirely new ways, boosting productivity by as much as 15 percent, and giving companies a competitive advantage. For consumers, VoIP is lowering communications costs and providing enhanced functionality.

It is our understanding that an amendment to Senate Bill 162 has been proposed by Senator Jimmy Stewart that would simply retain the status quo in Ohio in relation to VoIP regulation, allowing the Public Utility Commission of Ohio to act consistent with federal law, if necessary.

The VON Coalition urges the adoption of the VoIP amendment and asks for your support. Because VoIP services are designed and built over wide geographic areas without regard to state boundaries, a nationalized approach will allow networks to be deployed with common systems, platforms and processes, and result in efficiencies and cost savings to consumers. To continue to develop, there must be regulatory certainty for IP service providers, applications developers and equipment manufacturers.

In fact, a letter was sent to U.S. Congressional leaders last week by a group of leading companies and trade associations (including the VON Coalition) urging Congress to codify exclusive federal jurisdiction for IP-enabled services. I have attached that letter for your review.

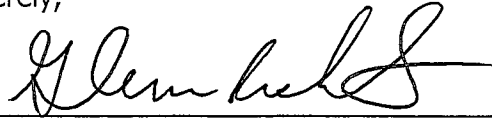
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<sup>1</sup> VON Coalition members include Cisco, Covad, Google, iBasis, Intel, Microsoft, New Global Telecom, PointOne, Skype, T-Mobile and Yahoo.

December 9, 2009

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our concerns about Senate Bill 162 and for your consideration of supporting the VoIP amendment proposed by Senator Stewart. Please let me know if I can answer any questions or provide additional information regarding this important issue.

Sincerely,



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Glenn S. Richards  
Executive Director  
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Attachment

Cc: Members of the Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee