



THE SENIORS COALITION

Seniors Support Update in Telecom Legislation

Seniors Look for User-Friendly Policy from Washington to Keep Them Online

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FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA – The Seniors Coalition, representing more than 4 million seniors nationwide, has announced its support for the Broadband Consumer Choice Act of 2005, authored by Senator John Ensign.

“Seniors are quickly becoming acquainted with the sea of opportunities that are available to them through the Internet,” said Mary Martin, Chairman of the Board of Directors for TSC. “In fact, there are 47 percent more seniors are jumping online than there were 5 years ago, and access to affordable service has become quite an urgent issue for many seniors throughout the country.”

Seniors have increasingly taken to the Internet for keeping in touch with friends and family members around the world, researching vast libraries of information on health and leisure-related activities, making travel arrangements, and shopping. Seniors with disabilities and mobility limitations have found the internet particularly valuable in providing them with a world of opportunity within the comfort of their own home. Senior access to the Internet, particularly for those on restrictive incomes, has frequently been placed in jeopardy by our current out-of-date telecom policy.

Current telecom legislation is nearly a decade old and barely addresses the mere existence of the Internet. These policies have permitted government obstacles which have restricted alternatives, stifled innovation and taken a toll on open corporate competition in the marketplace.

“Senior citizens living on restrictive incomes are the ones who are damaged the most by these ancient policies,” Martin said. “Seniors, in particular those with mobility limitations and other disabilities, can benefit the most from the opportunities afforded by the Internet; however, without the assistance of an open-market policy which ensures competition and promotes alternatives to drive down the consumer costs, seniors will continue to be left in the dark.”

“Senator John Ensign (R-NV) has proposed a telecommunications policy which will promote rapid innovation of technologies, promote provider competition which will drive down consumer cost, and most importantly, allow for consumers to select the

products and services they want from the companies they choose," Martin added. "With the speed at which the telecommunication industry is constantly changing, we need to act now to enact a governing policy which will promote access and options while keeping up with the times."

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The Seniors Coalition is the nation's leading free-market senior education and advocacy organization with a membership of more than 4 million seniors. We are a non-partisan, non-profit 501c(4) organization.