

The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual. ~Vince Lombardi

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**New York Times**  
To Sway Trump on Trade, Businesses Turn to Cable TV

Two Democrats squaring off in the 15th Congressional District primary Tuesday agree on at least two things: Both want broadband Internet service for rural counties and they want to unseat Republican U.S. Rep. Glenn William Thompson Jr. in November. Thompson, the incumbent, isn't challenged in the primary.

**Los Angeles Times**  
How HBO is vying with Amazon and Netflix to attract cord-cutters worldwide

Susan Boser, a sociology professor at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Wade Jodun, a career fishery biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, say having speedy, reliable Internet access is a must to help companies and grow the economy. "High speed internet is essential to help small businesses create jobs," she said. "It will provide opportunity to people in the rural areas. Democrats and Republicans should work together to develop a strategy," she said.

**Austin (TX) American-Statesman**  
Commentary: How net neutrality effort

Boser also believes renewable energy, road and water development and repair, and agricultural cooperatives are keys to job creation in community-based businesses. Rural counties are linked to the world

[could hurt Latino communities](#)

**Philadelphia Inquirer**  
['It's time to send a woman to Congress': Pa. candidates on final push before primary day](#)

**Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**  
[Money, personal attacks define Pennsylvania's GOP race for governor](#)

**Philadelphia Daily News**  
[Is this primary election Pennsylvania's oddest ever?](#)

**Pennlive**  
[Op-ed: Republicans, here's what to keep in mind on Tuesday](#)

**Philadelphia Inquirer**  
[Editorial: New districts and plenty of candidates mean nothing without voter turnout](#)  
[Tuesday](#)

through high-speed internet, Jodun said. "If small businesses are to thrive in today's world, we need high-speed internet just like roads and highways are needed for commerce," he said.

The district also needs cellphone towers. "In the campaign I made the 75-mile drive from St. Marys to Clinton County. There was no cell phone reception. None. What happens when someone is miles from a house and a telephone and they need help? How do you get emergency help?" Jodun said.

Thompson wasn't available for an interview, but in a statement he said broadband expansion is part of the farm bill slated to come up for congressional review. "Putting a high priority on broadband deployment will improve educational opportunities, health care outcomes through the utilization of telemedicine, and enhance the overall connectivity of businesses and the public sector," he said. "Agribusinesses can use innovative technologies to become more productive, and as a result create greater job opportunities in some of our more rural counties," he said. — **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

Maybe it seems laughable, maybe certainly unthinkable. A world without internet? That sounds as crazy as a home without electricity.

Which was exactly the point U.S. Rep. Robert Aderholt made while speaking recently in Hamilton in rural northwest Alabama. And it's why Aderholt invited U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue to visit his Alabama congressional district and bring a big check. The U.S. Department of Agriculture provided a \$3 million grant to partner with Tombigbee Communications to extend its broadband internet service to a sparsely populated area.

It was, Perdue said, not unlike bringing electricity to homes in the 20th century. So Aderholt talked about his father, Bobby, growing up without electricity in the same rural northwest Alabama region. "While so much of America was living in the 20th century back in the 1930s and 1940s, my dad and so many in his generation in rural Alabama and rural Georgia and rural America were still living in the 19th century," the congressman said. "It took the (USDA's) Rural Electrification Administration to change all that. "We now need this kind of same push and this same kind of effort when it comes to broadband access to rural America."

Because without it, you're still stuck in the 20th century. "This situation is exactly what we saw when we saw the need to expand electricity 100 years ago," Aderholt said. Gov. Kay Ivey said that some 842,000 people living in rural Alabama do not have access to broadband internet. That's almost 20 percent of the state's population living without what Aderholt and Perdue would describe as 21st century electricity.

Project that percentage across the rest of rural America and that's why Aderholt led the push in Congress' recently-passed spending bill to include \$625 million specifically to expand broadband access to the countryside. Aderholt described it as a major statement on the importance of rural America. "For too long, the people who have been making decisions who affect daily lives as rural America as some of that other part of the country," Aderholt said. "They recognize that rural America is out there. They know it's out there somewhere. And they

know there are needs for rural America. But it always seems to be something we're going to do next year or next time."

The support for the funding was strong from the White House, Aderholt said. "President Trump understands the importance of rural Alabama and rural America," Aderholt said. "Because he understands rural America, that's why he wanted to be a supporter of legislation like this." The funds will be administered by the USDA and Perdue said the agency expects to begin receiving applications from state and local governments this summer. It will likely require matching funds in the manner of the grant provided to Tombigbee, which has already spent almost four times as much of its own money in the project as it received in federal funding. Perdue, the former governor of Georgia before joining Trump's cabinet as agriculture secretary, lauded the work that Tombigbee is doing. The company has already established broadband connections in small towns such as Hamilton and Winfield and will use the USDA grant to expand it in area of Brilliant - population: 900 - in Marion County.

Ultimately, Tombigbee president and CEO Steve Foshee wants to carry broadband connectivity to every household in the company's four-county footprint of Marion, Winston, Fayette and Lamar - an objective, he acknowledged, as "an ambitious goal." "Steve, what you and your board of directors and the team her at Tombigbee have done is exactly what I hope we can see all across of rural America," Perdue said during the ceremony inside a Tombigbee hangar in Hamilton. "Today, the connectivity we're talking about is data connectivity. We need to be connected with one another from a data perspective and that's exactly what (Tombigbee's) 'freedom Fiber' does. You are the forerunners of what I hope to see all across the country. It is potentially one of the most transformative things I think of the 21st century we can see all across America to give all of rural America access to highest-speed broadband connectivity like Tombigbee has done. Thank you for leading the way."

The power of broadband access is not simply to download movies or music quicker or to browse the internet at a faster speed. It's about economic development and improving quality of life, Aderholt said. "There's really been created two Americas," Aderholt said. "One America where people have access to the best tools, access to high-speed broadband internet where they can educate their children, they can run and expand their business and they can access the latest medical technology and the latest expertise. "The other America has been cut off from some of these same opportunities. And we find ourselves waiting to get and wanting to get what those cities in suburban areas have had for many years."

It's a massive project. Foshee said that for Tombigbee to reach every household in its four-county region will cost about \$40 million. So even as Perdue praised the work done already by Tombigbee - which has invested more than \$10 million itself in installing broadband to be coupled with the \$3 million federal grant - the work is not even halfway to completion. "This is for our people," Foshee said. "It's to change the narrative of northwest Alabama. We're saying we're open for business, we're open to having the best educational system in America. We're open to having great access to medicine. "We hope this can be a model. We hope this can spread throughout Alabama. We'd like to see every household have a gigabyte connection. It would change Alabama."

Massive project and cost or not, Aderholt said, rural America can't continue to be an afterthought in Washington. "From the perspective of all of us who are here today, it's hard to imagine anyone that could not see the importance of rural America and the role it plays in making our country great," Aderholt said. "We supply access to wholesome food that is among the lowest cost in the world. We provide cotton that and other crops that feed and clothe the world and we provide the hands of labor in manufacturing. "But unfortunately, to some people - especially in Washington, I have found - have a true misunderstanding of people who makes their lives in places like rural Alabama and rural America."

– **AL.com**

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Senate Democrats opened up a new front Wednesday in the fight to preserve the internet from interference by the broadband providers that control its on-ramps. But as good as it was to see them push back against the wrongheaded approach taken by the new Republican majority on the Federal Communications Commission, the maneuver is likely to be more of a distraction than a solution.

At issue is how to preserve net neutrality. Broadband providers that serve home internet users face little real competition, and they are uniquely positioned to distort competition online by, for example, favoring particular websites and services for a fee. After several earlier net-neutrality efforts ran into legal trouble, the FCC's Democratic majority in 2015 classified broadband access service as a utility and imposed a set of strict neutrality rules. Last year, however, the commission's new Republican majority voted not just to rescind those rules, but effectively to drop all efforts by the FCC to preserve net neutrality.

On Wednesday, Senate Democrats moved to force a vote on a resolution to restore the 2015 rules, and they have 50 Senators lined up in support. Yet the resolution faces next-to-insurmountable odds in the House, where top Republicans have praised the FCC's deregulatory approach, and with like-minded President Trump. The most meaningful fights will take place in the courts and in state legislatures, where net neutrality supporters are seeking to restore the 2015 rules or impose similar ones at the state level. Even opponents of the strict 2015 rules recognize that the continual legal and regulatory gyrations are a problem. Rather than jousting over a resolution of disapproval, Congress needs to put this issue to bed once and for all by crafting a bipartisan deal giving the commission limited but clear authority to regulate broadband providers and preserve net neutrality.

– **Los Angeles Times editorial**

