

February 16, 2010

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Ministerial Alliance Against the Digital Divide (MAADD), we are writing to ask you to support Senate Bill 469/Assembly Bill 696, the Wisconsin Telecom Modernization Act. This legislation will encourage communications providers to bring state of the art broadband investment to communities that need it most, which will provide Wisconsin citizens with better access to healthcare, education, economic development and jobs.

MAADD is a 25,000+ member next generation civil rights organization devoted to bridging the digital divide and promoting personal and economic development in low income and minority communities across the county. The organization is led by over 1500 ministers who are deeply connected to the communities that they serve and understand the real life struggles that people endure on a daily basis. Our recently formed Wisconsin Chapter already has nearly 7000 members who are not only dedicated to promoting technology as a means to transform the economic, social, political and cultural landscapes in Wisconsin's low income and minority communities but are also working to bring these communities together to participate in social activism on a massive scale.

SB 469/AB696 will remove outdated rules that are stifling the growth of technology in the Badger state. Without this necessary change, Wisconsin communities will be left behind with less infrastructure investment, less job creation, less competition for consumers and most importantly, less access to state-of-the-art broadband technology. If this happens the state of Wisconsin will stagnate, and as you know, whenever the general population suffers, the suffering is exponential in low income and minority communities that will feel the impact to a much greater extent.

On the other hand, legislation that stimulates increased broadband investment creates unlimited potential for our communities – it can allow underserved neighborhoods to promote economic development through the establishment of minority small businesses that hire locally. It can provide Wisconsin citizens with better access to healthcare, education, and jobs. And it can give the voiceless a voice in the political process so that they can have an impact on issues that affect their everyday lives.

Senate Bill 469 and Assembly Bill 696 puts the state's priorities in order as it eliminates resources spent on managing outdated regulations and allows those resources to be used to create jobs and increase broadband investment.

The future of the state of Wisconsin is at a crossroads. We can continue on a path that will take decades for minority communities to see real progress or we can jump start the



Ministerial Alliance Against the Digital Divide

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process to bring real, meaningful change to the communities that you serve. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to vote, “yes” on Senate Bill 469/Assembly Bill 696 - legislation that is so important to improving the lives of your constituents. Please contact us at 866-297-0164 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev James L. Demus III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the "III".

Reverend James L. Demus III  
Founder and Co-Director

Reverend Terrance Sims  
President, Wisconsin Chapter