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Contacts: Olivia Wein (owein@nclc.org) or Jan Kruse (jkruse@nclc.org), 617.542.8010

STATEMENT REGARDING THE BROADBAND ADOPTION ACT OF 2013

(WASHINGTON, DC) Today, advocates from a dozen organizations across the nation, including the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC), expressed support for [legislation](#) introduced by Representative Doris Matsui (D-CA), Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Anna Eshoo (D-CA) that would modernize the Lifeline program (a federal program that subsidizes phone service for low-income households) to include affordable broadband service. “The Broadband Adoption Act of 2013 will bring modern communications services within the reach of struggling households with limited means,” said National Consumer Law Center Attorney Olivia Wein.

The bill would allow eligible consumers to choose the form of communications service that best meets their needs, from a traditional local service via wireline phone in the home, a modest wireless plan (currently around 250 minutes a month) or basic broadband service. The Broadband Adoption Act builds on the successful recently reformed Lifeline program that has helped connect poor households to phone service. The Internet has shaped how consumers connect with friends and family; participate in civic engagement; find jobs; interact with the workplace and commerce; and access education, health care, and social services. The Broadband Adoption Act will promote access to broadband communications for those who are left behind due to cost. “This pending legislation is timely and important because it bridges the digital divide and brings the nation closer to having a 21st century communication network that reaches *all* consumers,” said Wein.

The following support the pending legislation: Attorneys at the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC), Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Center for Accessible Technology, Center for Media Justice, Connecticut Legal Services, Crossroads Urban Center, The Greenlining Institute, HeartShare, The Low Income Utility Advocacy Project, NJ Shares, Ohio Poverty Law Center, and ProSeniors.

Related Material:

Rep. Matsui’s press release with overview of Broadband Adoption Act of 2013:
http://www.matsui.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3435&Itemid=400149

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Since 1969, the nonprofit National Consumer Law Center® (NCLC®) has used its expertise in consumer law and energy policy to work for consumer justice and economic security for low-income and other disadvantaged people, including older adults, in the United States. www.nclc.org