

TC-1/ WC-1 Resolution on Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture in the United States

Whereas the “Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act of 2018” has been introduced in the United States Senate (S. 2343) and House of Representatives (H.R. 4881);

Whereas precision agriculture technologies and practices allow farmers to significantly increase crop yields, eliminate overlap in operations, and reduce inputs such as seed, fertilizer, pesticides, water, and fuel;

Whereas these technologies allow farmers to collect data in real time about their fields, automate field management, and maximize resources;

Whereas studies estimate that precision agriculture technologies can reduce agricultural operation costs by up to 25 dollars per acre and increase farm yields by up to 70 percent by 2050;

Whereas advancement of precision agriculture will also benefit U.S. and global consumers to ensure a safe, reliable, and affordable future food supply;

Whereas the critical cost savings and productivity benefits of precision agriculture cannot be realized without the availability of reliable broadband Internet access service delivered to the agricultural land of the United States;

Whereas the deployment of broadband Internet access service to unserved agricultural land is critical to the United States economy and to the continued leadership of the United States in global food production;

Whereas despite the growing demand for broadband Internet access service on agricultural land, broadband Internet access service is not consistently available where needed for agricultural operations;

Whereas the “Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act of 2018” calls for the establishment of the “Task Force for Reviewing the Connectivity and Technology Needs of Precision Agriculture in the United States,” which must include representatives from State and local governments;

Whereas the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) has an important role to play in the deployment of broadband Internet access service on unserved agricultural land to promote precision agriculture and is required by the Act to appoint the Task Force for that purpose; *and*

Whereas state public utilities commissioners have a demonstrated track record of advocating for broadband Internet buildout and have an expertise in assisting with that buildout by working with telecommunications providers to reduce regulatory hurdles; *now, therefore be it*

Resolved that the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, as convened at the 2018 Summer Policy Summit in Scottsdale, Arizona, encourages Congress to pass the “Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act of 2018” and the FCC to appoint state utility commissioners to the task force.

*Sponsored by the Committee on Telecommunications and the Committee on Water.
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors on July 18, 2018.*