

“Small Businesses and Their Limitations Without Reliable Access to Rural Broadband.”

Testimony of Mr. Matt Crescenzo

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Hello Friends and Neighbors my name is Matthew Crescenzo. I am a 44 year old father of 3 young girls and a husband to my wife Krista. Krista is a nurse at Gillete Childrens hospital located in St. Paul Minnesota and works in the child brain injury rehab unit. I work in this building designing automated machines like our Star Lab CNC plasma machine. I also train folks at schools, businesses, garages. I have trained well over 700 times across the USA and have been fortunate to train deaf and quadrapalegic customers...who are some of the sharpest minds you will find. The place you are sitting at or standing on was only possible through use of the internet. A unique gift of communication between people. We would be having this great meeting near and in an 100 year old barn ready to collapse...now wouldnt that be exciting. When I suffered a spinal cord injury on the job my world became small. Frustration and desperation were my weighing heavily on my heart. I pooled resources and stretched my minds capability beyond my expected pesonal limits. With the help of my good friend David Boucher who currently works for Toro company and who set up a website for me, I was able to take my ideas and machine products, bringing them to the internet and discover a vast amount of interest in these parts that I dreamed and engineered. I was able to take my passions to market. It was the internet that allowed all this to exist out of the idea of offering something awesome for a good price. I could not have done it without the internet and without my Father Peter Reed Crescenzo who challenged and supported me ...sometimes challenged more than supported. But that is often a Fathers burden...I love and respect my Father. Where we are sitting today I could not have imagined years ago. We have seemingly unlimited potential for growth here. I have sacrificed my wage to build this business for years and years. We are ready to take the next steps and I am ready to take a pay check. Ha. We fumble through our day using the local internet. It is as important now as it was when I started this business. We even have a dedicated line of 10 megs up and 10 megs down which wouldnt get you a hotdog in the twin cities and it runs us \$277 a month. We deal with dropped calls when using internet to rebooting our modem several times a day. I thought I was alone. For years we were rebooting our modem in the house in the shop. It wasnt until my friends and neighbors told me they do the same thing. Our business relies on customer experience not volume but the network of very happy customers to keep us busy and boy are we busy. It is crucial to our success that we can upload training videos, download customer files and talk on the phone without interruption. The infrastructure is toast out here. The technology has moved beyond our rural areas 20 years ago. I have seen businesses close because they cannot have a robust security system tied to the internet or really cannot develop without access to high speed internet, businesses moving out of state not only because of local ordinances but because of the vast desert of little to no speed internet we have here. Friends and neighbors we need real help for our community to prosper. I commend these folks before us for shining a bright light on our dimly lit network. Communication between people is what makes good communities and binds the heart of mankind. The invention of the internet was brilliant.... and I believe... inevitable. However without bolstering our community and supporting ideas like

this we remaining in a dark age. The industrial revolution is not over... it has changed. In many ways it has gotten cleaner, better and smarter.