



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

*Frank Caputo*

Member of Parliament  
Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo

July 6, 2022

Darren Entwistle  
President, TELUS  
510 Georgia St W,  
Vancouver, BC  
V6B 0M3

Dear Mr. Entwistle,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Member of Parliament for Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo. As an MP for a largely rural area of Interior B.C., I have become acutely aware of the underserved communities in my riding. Two important telecommunications issues were raised when I toured some of the rural communities this past fall: a lack of cellphone service and access to reliable, affordable high-speed internet.

The mayors and councilors in Barriere, population 1,700, Clearwater, 2,300, and Clinton, 641, each shared the pressing need for these services that so many in urban areas take for granted. Not being able to call for help in an emergency is the main concern. In Clearwater, for instance, there are 425,000 people that drive through or stay while visiting nearby Wells Gray Provincial Park in an average summer.

Cell service ends 10 kilometers outside Clearwater so that means no service for the remaining 36-km drive to Helmcken Falls, the park's main attraction; for residents of the Clearwater Valley, only landline service and internet via expensive satellite providers. This means these people and region is entirely cut off from calling for help if there is an emergency outside someone's home.

*Ottawa*

813 Justice Building, Ottawa,  
ON, K1A 0A6  
613-995-6931

*Kamloops*

6-275 Seymour St., Kamloops,  
BC, V2C 2E7  
250-851-4991

*100 Mile House*

118-475 Birch Ave. 100 Mile House,  
BC, V0K 2E0  
250-395-4381

I am told TELUS usually bases service on residential households. As there are only 1,100 households in Clearwater, this formula does not lend itself well to cell service consideration, but it does not take in the whole picture of the high summer visitor numbers.

In Barriere and Clinton, the lack of reliable and affordable high-speed internet is an impediment to development. They need this critical link to communicate and offer competitive, innovative services to the rest of the world. I was told during meetings in Barriere that once someone is just one kilometer outside the downtown, the internet is nearly non-functional. In the village of Clinton, workers who would have been able to work from home at the beginning of the pandemic were forced back into the office because of unreliable internet services. TELUS itself has noted that this community is considered “underserved.”

I would like to better understand what impediments exist to offering these services to people living rurally or in smaller communities, and how this might be overcome. I believe the political will exists to tackle these long-standing issues. Please contact my office if you would like to further discuss these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Frank Caputo', with a stylized, cursive script.

Frank Caputo, M.P.  
Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo