



***Strengthening Rural America  
for the Benefit of All of America***

**Advocacy, Education, Participation**

**2016-17 Membership Guide**



# The Association for Small and Rural Wireless Carriers

- RWA is a Washington, DC based trade association that relentlessly advocates on behalf of rural wireless carriers with less than 100,000 subscribers .
- RWA's mission is to ensure spectrum-based opportunities for wireless companies operating in rural America through advocacy and education.
- The key to RWA's success is active member participation.



# Engaged Membership

- Over 50 Member Companies
  - Carrier members provide wireless service to rural areas of the USA, including Alaska
- Member-Driven Committees and Policy Positions
  - Active **Board** of Directors
  - Knowledgeable and responsive **Public Policy Committee**
  - Resourceful **Education Committee** uses briefings, white papers, webinars and member teleconferences to inform and instruct.
  - **Member** driven advocacy approach



# A Strong Advocate

## Sole Focus: Ensuring policymakers hear YOUR voice.

- RWA routinely meets with congressional and regulatory staff and participates in proceedings, hearings and government briefings advocating and defending its positions.
- RWA files dozens of pleadings, comments and *ex partes* each year covering wide-ranging issues including:
  - Universal Service Reform/Mobility Fund /Connect America Fund
  - Spectrum/Auction Terms
  - Access to Devices
  - Competition



# Shaping the Platform

## Members lead the way

- Through the input of committees and members, the Board of Directors determines RWA's advocacy focus.
- Carrier members review pleadings and comments prior to filing - you can ensure your concerns are formally addressed.
- RWA committees and councils serve as focused information sharing and policy development forums and are open to all members.
- Members work with RWA's legal team to attend strategic meetings with congressional offices and regulatory agencies to ensure advocacy is laser-focused .



# Efforts with Results

## Robust Advocacy = Rural-Friendly Outcomes

- RWA is instrumental in ensuring that small rural carriers have a meaningful opportunity to participate in spectrum auctions. Working alongside industry allies, the efforts resulted in a number of recent wins.
  - Consensus-based proposal for 600 MHz Incentive Auction license areas (Partial Economic Areas or PEAs)
  - Updated Designated Entity & Competitive Bidding Rules
    - 15% Rural Provider Bidding Credit
    - Prohibitions on Certain Joint Bidding Arrangements that Include Nationwide Carriers
    - Additional Terms that Aim to Aid Small, Regional Bidders in Auctions



# Future-Focused Representation

## Advocating for a Sustainable Outlook

- RWA continues to work with the FCC to help create a sustainable Mobility Fund Phase II program that will preserve service that would otherwise not exist and expand access to LTE in areas that the market will not serve.
  - Educate FCC staff on the need for dual technology coverage to ensure public safety.
  - Advocate for eligibility that includes ubiquitous support where consumers visit and work (not only inhabited areas).
  - Assist in forming a challenge process to accurately depict wireless coverage, including signal strength and other critical measurements.
  - Grassroots activities serve as the cornerstone of our MF II efforts



# Future-Focused Representation

## Advocating for a Sustainable Outlook

- RWA is seeking reform of the current Universal Service contribution methodology.
  - Educate the current Administration, Congress and FCC staff on the need for USF contribution reform.
  - Advocate for an increase in funding for rural broadband deployment.
  - Demonstrate through fact based research the impact broadband deployment has on rural economic development.
  - Emphasize the dependence of urban America on rural America.





# Vital Information You Need

## News, Industry Analysis & Education

- Member-only briefings detail congressional and FCC actions and other issues that impact your business including spectrum auctions, reporting requirements and emergency system compliance.
- Regular regulatory updates via conference call.
- Educational programming via conferences, workshops and webcasts.
- Access to your industry peers via networking opportunities, councils and conferences.
- Knowledgeable staff with years of experience supporting the rural wireless industry.



# Dedicated Leadership: 2016-17 Board of Directors

- Brian Woody, Union Wireless (WY/UT) - President and CEO
- Michael Kilgore, Sagebrush Cellular, Inc. (MT/ND) - Vice President
- Roger Schmitz, NewCore Wireless (MN) - Treasurer
- Bert Potts, STRATA Networks (UT) - Secretary
- Michael Candelaria, Mid-Rivers Communications (MT)
- Todd Houseman, United Wireless (KS)
- Bill Levy, Huawei Technologies USA
- John Nettles, Pine Belt Wireless (AL)
- Jana Wallace, Panhandle Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (OK)



# General/Regulatory Counsel and Staff

- Carri Bennet, General Counsel
- Daryl Zakov, Assistant General Counsel
- Erin Fitzgerald, Regulatory Counsel
- Michele Giroux, Chief Administrative Officer



# Public Policy Committee

The Public Policy Committee is tasked with assessing the impact of legislative and regulatory policy developments that stand to affect the operations of small, rural wireless carriers. This committee helps shape the association's legislative and regulatory agendas and public policy initiatives in order to better serve the associations' members.

- Mike Kilgore, Nemont (MT/ND) - Chairperson
- Jake Baldwin, Cross Wireless (OK)
- Michael Candelaria, Mid-Rivers Cellular (MT)
- Doug Eidahl, Vantage Point Solutions (SD)
- Shawn Hanson, PTCI (OK)
- Mike Higgins, West Central Wireless (TX)
- Erin Lutts, Mid-Rivers Cellular (MT)
- Steven D. Lysne, SRT Communications (ND)
- Lynn Merrill, Monte R. Lee & Company (OK)
- Brian Woody, Union Wireless (UT/WY)



# Education Committee

The Education Committee guides the association in assessing its members' educational needs. The committee provides educational briefings and resource recommendations to RWA's members on technical, financial, operational and marketing matters. The Educational Committee also serves as a clearinghouse for instructional material and educational webcasts that serve to inform RWA members about revenue generating opportunities and/or cost saving methodologies.

- Shilah Butler, Copper Valley (AK) - Chairperson
- Grif Griffin, West Central Wireless (TX)
- Todd Houseman, United Wireless (KS)
- Curtis Knobloch, Telispire (TX)
- Julie McGowan, Globecomm (NY)
- David Mould, Ericsson (TX)
- Patrick Rhyne, Wells Fargo Financial Advisors (NC)
- Jana Wallace, RWA BOD Representative



# Membership Details

- A **Voting (Carrier) Member** is an FCC licensee or one that leases spectrum from an FCC licensee with fewer than 100,000 subscribers.
  - Annual Membership Investment
    - **Carrier 1** (0 – 2,000 subscribers): \$3,450
    - **Carrier 2** (2,001 – 10,000 subscribers): \$6,000
    - **Carrier 3** (10,001 – 100,000 subscribers): \$11,500
- **Supporting Members** are resellers of wireless services, unlicensed providers of service and affiliated companies of Voting Members.
  - Annual Membership Investment: \$4,600



# Membership Applications

You may email [info@ruralwireless.org](mailto:info@ruralwireless.org) to request a membership application or visit [www.ruralwireless.org](http://www.ruralwireless.org) "Membership".

Membership applications can be found within each membership category.



# Rural Wireless Association

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