



News from

THE RIPON SOCIETY

June 27, 2010

Ripon Society Hosts Briefing and Panel Discussion on the Future of the Internet

The Ripon Society hosted its third “Bully Box Lunch” briefing and panel discussion of the year this past Friday, an event that focused on an issue that impacts both the American people and our Nation’s economy -- the Internet of the 21st Century.

“For most Americans, the Internet is a way to keep up with news and stay connected to the rest of the world,” stated Jim Conzelman, the President & CEO of The Ripon Society. “But the Internet is more than that. Increasingly, it is an engine of economic growth, as well. As such, there is a growing concern that nothing be done to upset the applecart with regard to continuing this growth and any new federal regulations that may be put in place.

“The purpose of Friday’s lunch was to discuss what these new regulations may be, what the Internet means to our Nation, and why -- at a time when America is emerging from the Great Recession -- it is critical that Washington get it right with regard to this vital sector of our country’s economy.”

The lunch was held at the Capitol Visitors Center and moderated by David Redl, the Director of Regulatory Affairs for CTIA, The Wireless Association. It featured a keynote address by former U.S. Representative Tom Tauke, who served on the Energy and Commerce Committee while in Congress and is the Executive Vice President for Public Affairs, Policy and Communications for Verizon Communications today.

In his remarks, Tauke characterized the Internet as “huge, thriving, and growing.” He also noted that unlike other sectors of the economy which has seen decreased investment over the past several years, investment in the Internet has increased. Pointing to a study that showed there to be \$1.5 trillion in economic benefits from the Internet each year, Tauke outlined several principles he believed should be followed with regard to federal policy and the future of the Internet. These principles include: making sure the customer is in charge; making sure the customer feels safe on the Internet; and encouraging investment and innovation to ensure the Internet’s continued growth.

In addition to Tauke’s speech, today’s lunch also featured a panel discussion with some of the leading experts on Internet and telecommunications policy in Washington. These experts included: Matt



The Honorable Tom Tauke, Executive Vice President of Verizon, delivers the keynote address at The Ripon Society’s June 25th policy briefing.

The Internet is an engine of economic growth. As such, there is a growing concern that nothing be done to upset the applecart with regard to continuing this growth and any new federal regulations that may be put in place.

Mandel, Legislative Director for Florida Congressman Cliff Stearns; Matthew Hussey, Legislative Assistant for Maine Senator Olympia Snowe; Christine D. Kurth, Policy Director & Wireline Counsel in FCC Commissioner McDowell’s Office; and Dean Garfield, President & CEO of the Information Technology Industry Council.

According to Conzelman, the format of the lunch was intended to foster discussion among the featured participants and those who attended the event. About 60 Ripon Society members and congressional staff members attended the event. Conzelman also noted that the next Bully Box Lunch discussion is scheduled for July 12th. The topic of this event will be “The \$250,000 Question: Which Taxes will Obama Raise?”

The Ripon Society is a public policy organization that was founded in 1962 and takes its name from the town where the Republican Party was born in 1854 -- Ripon, Wisconsin. One of the main goals of The Ripon Society is to promote the ideas and

principles that have made America great and contributed to the GOP’s past success. These ideas include keeping our nation secure, keeping taxes low and having a federal government that is smaller, smarter and more accountable to the people.

For more information on The Ripon Society, please visit <http://www.riponsociety.org>.

RS



**The Ripon Society
Bully Box Lunch Briefing
on the Internet of the 21st Century
June 25, 2010**

Clockwise from top left:

Dean Garfield, President & CEO of the Information Technology Industry Council; Matthew Hussey, Legislative Assistant for Maine Senator Olympia Snowe; Christine D. Kurth, Policy Director & Wireline Counsel in FCC Commissioner McDowell's Office; David Redl, the Director of Regulatory Affairs for CTIA, The Wireless Association; and, Matt Mandel, Legislative Director for Florida Congressman Cliff Stearns.

All photos by Marty LaVor

For more information on future Ripon Society events, please visit www.riponsociety.org.