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Have you ever had a favorite superhero? What did you admire about them – their super speed, their reliability, or their ability to connect the world using these powers? Whatever the quality, we look for these attributes in family, friends, co-workers, and in our Internet. Although we desire these qualities, many rural Minnesotans are left without fast and reliable internet service where they live.

Internet in rural areas is important because it has the ability to help people in numerous ways. One way rural residents can benefit is through the educational materials available online. In fact, many schools now require students to submit homework online, even offering classes via the internet. These online courses are especially important for students living on farms who want to further their education while still working. Without rural broadband, some students are forced to choose between college and working.

Increased communication is another benefit. With broadband, distance disappears. One can Skype or FaceTime across town or across the world. This can help military families stay connected and open up possibilities for education and employment. However, in order for Minnesota's rural residents to utilize these technologies, they need to have the superhero speed and reliability of broadband internet.

Great as the need for internet is, many challenges exist in providing rural Minnesota with fast and reliable internet. One of the main struggles that providers encounter is the low population within a vast amount of space. This means that companies would need to spend a greater amount of money to establish a network that could cover the large area while having a lower number of people using and paying for the service. Another problem that internet providers face is establishing a clear connection because of geographical barriers such as trees and elevation changes. Many times residents will have to put up receivers on high roofs or grain bins in order to catch a good signal. Because of these obstacles, many rural Minnesotans are left with inadequate internet service.

Knowing that rural residents are unable to connect with high-speed internet, elected officials could become the superheroes they need by working to create policy similar to the Rural Electrification Act (REA) of 1936. In the 1930's, many rural residents were left without electricity for similar reasons that people are being left without high-speed internet today: high initial installation costs and a limited amount of subscribers. Realizing this, the federal government stepped in and provided rural areas with low-cost loans that were used to start building electric infrastructures through local cooperatives. This method worked to increase the electrical availability. Therefore, it is worth investigating how that same idea could help provide rural Minnesotans with high-speed internet. By using this plan of action, all levels of government could provide internet to rural Minnesota.

In conclusion, many Minnesotans are unable to receive high-speed internet. Although the benefits of having internet are great, the challenges of providing internet are greater, leaving rural Minnesotans to look to their governments to save the day.