Teresa L. Garey

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October 11, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary

Federal Communications Commission

445 12th Street, S.W., Room TW-B204

Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Reply to Comments by Buckeye Hills Regional Council Regarding the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund WC Docket Nos. 19-126 and 10-90**

Madam Secretary:

In reply to comments submitted by the Buckeye Hills Regional Council on September 19, 2019, I am disappointed to learn that the FCC accepted the standard that having one broadband household in a census block constituted broadband coverage for an entire block. That’s comparable to having $1,000,000 to feed a starving nation and counting it a success because you fed just one single family.

Because I have lived in the distressed Southern Perry County, Ohio region my entire life and I have professional affiliation with state and local economic development and business services in southeastern Ohio, I believe I have a well-rounded view of the broadband crisis in Appalachian Ohio.

The lack of broadband has cost Southern Ohio the opportunity to:

* Entice employers to relocate to our area causing tax dollars and families to flow out of our counties. Businesses need technology and technology needs broadband!
* People who have lost their jobs cannot file their weekly unemployment benefit claims online, it’s the only permissible avenue per state regulations
* My children could not participate in Post Secondary education when in high school
* The high school has laptops for each child, but they can’t use them at home without broadband
* Many high school educators are requiring assignments be completed online resulting in a 30 minute drive to McDonalds
* Winters are often harsh in Ohio and the lack of broadband causes children to fall behind because when they cannot complete the Blizzard Bags
* Cell coverage is dismal at best, causing delays in emergency services – this is life or death!
* My mother’s implanted medical device will not transmit urgent messages while in her home
* Paying bills online has become standard– sounds simple, but it isn’t here
* My husband could not accept a remote job because there is no broadband available
* Christmas shopping is done the old fashioned way, a trip to the only store in town, Walmart
* Some people are fortunate to have a Verizon Hotspot but it’s costly at $90-100+. Many people in my area can’t afford to pay their water bill, therefore, a hotspot is the first bill to go when times get tough.
* I cannot even listen to an e-book, use Spotify, or do online banking.

Each of these points support one or more definitions of a crisis which by definition is:

1. A time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger
2. A time when a difficult or important decision must be made
3. A turning point of a disease when an important change tales place, indicating either recover or death

I’ve read the comments submitted by the Buckeye Hills Regional Council and I find them valid and worthy of consideration by the FCC. The comments above give you the real time, daily struggles of the citizens in Southern Ohio. These people are myself, my family, friends, neighbors, and the few local businesses that remain. My city friends often say, “Why would you want to live there?” Why indeed! Most of us see it as the cost of living in the beautiful hills of Appalachian Ohio, but is it really a consequence of our making or of yours?

I simply ask for your open, honest consideration to the facts presented by Buckeye Hills Regional Council and your effort to determine the true status of the broadband crisis in Appalachian Ohio.

Sincerely,

Teresa L. Garey

Citizen of Appalachian Ohio & Workforce Specialist for Southern Ohio