



**CITY OF LOGAN, DIVISION OF POLICE**

**CHIEF JERRY MELLINGER**

**50 SOUTH MULBERRY ST. LOGAN, OHIO 43138-1241**

**DISPATCH (740) 385-6866 FAX (740) 385-2800**



**Capt. Ryan Gabriel**  
*Executive Officer*

**Lt. Gregg Cluley**  
*Investigations Supervisor*

**Lt. Mike Walton**  
*Patrol Supervisor*

**Lt. Tony Byram**  
*Patrol Supervisor*

Oct 17, 2019

To: Federal Communications Commission

From: Jerry Mellinger

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 would like to provide a few replies in support of the proposed modifications to the RDOF.

There are numerous issues regarding the lack of broadband/cellular service in our region that are alarming. I am only addressing the issue regarding the effect the lack of broadband/cellular service has on public safety communication.

The immediate issue is the fact that many households in our region do not have traditional landlines to the household. The primary reason is financial, as running lines to houses not immediately near a roadway or existing lines can be cost prohibitive for households at, or below the poverty line. This makes cellular phones the viable, and most cost-effective option for many households. Smart phones provide the primary communication device in rural homes, as they offer more features, such as texting features, social media apps, entertainment apps, etc.

Households that have only cellular phones as the primary means of communication with public safety entities are challenged by the fact that Southeastern Ohio topography and the abundance of hills, make cellular coverage in many areas unreliable or non-existent. These factors put members of the public that live outside areas that offer broadband at risk for greatly diminished capability to contact public safety agencies in times of emergency, such as fire, medical issues or law enforcement request. Many areas surrounding the city of Logan are "cellular deserts" with little, or no connectivity to a reliable cellular signal, regardless of the carrier they subscribe to.

This issue is further complicated in the Hocking Hills area specifically. As one of the highest tourism areas in the state of Ohio, millions of visitors come to the regions annually. The large influx of visitors creates a large volume of emergency calls from people unfamiliar with the area, and the primary means of communication is cellular phone calls, many of these calls, when made, are difficult to locate and respond to in a timely manner. This creates a burden on local public safety agencies in receiving accurate location information and hinders a timely response to these situations, especially medical



**CITY OF LOGAN, DIVISION OF POLICE**

**CHIEF JERRY MELLINGER**

**50 SOUTH MULBERRY ST. LOGAN, OHIO 43138-1241**

**DISPATCH (740) 385-6866 FAX (740) 385-2800**



**Capt. Ryan Gabriel**  
*Executive Officer*

**Lt. Gregg Cluley**  
*Investigations Supervisor*

**Lt. Mike Walton**  
*Patrol Supervisor*

**Lt. Tony Byram**  
*Patrol Supervisor*

emergencies. As one of the top tourism destinations in Ohio, and adequate cellular/broadband network needs to be established to ensure visitors and residents alike, have reliable, accessible communications to ensure an accurate and timely response to emergency situations in the region to ensure the health and safety the public that reside in the region, whether a long time resident, or short term visitor. This issue alone should make this a high priority issue to address for the region.

Sincerely,

Jerry Mellinger

Chief of Police