E-Rate continuation comments

The E-Rate program is very essential for public libraries access to the Internet. Our library is located in a rural community where there is inadequate access to broadband Internet for many individuals. Some of our branch libraries are unable to obtain broadband Internet as defined by the FCC. If the E-rate program is curtailed or cut back, the likelihood of broadband service ever coming to these areas is slim, due the the high price of provisioning.

We would like to see the administration of the program reduce the amount of paperwork required for use of the program. Many small libraries do not have the staffing or expertise needed to apply and keep track of the multiple forms and timetables required of the program. We understand the need to document the process to eliminate the possibility of fraud, but the number of forms needed could easily be cut in half and still provide good documentation of the purchase of services and equipment. It would be easier to submit copies of invoices attached to E-rate forms rather than repeating the information in the invoice on another E-rate form. Reduced paperwork would allow more libraries to participate in the program and thereby achieve the goals of the program. If the paperwork is too burdensome, libraries will not file for the program and the goals of the program will not be reached.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this process.
Sincerely,
Michael Davis, Director
Camden County Library District.