

ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARY

October 19, 2017

RE: Wireline Competition Bureau/Comments on E-Rate C2
WC Docket: 13-184

On behalf of the Trustees of the Ontario Public Library (OPL), I am pleased to be able to provide input on the impact of having access to secure and sufficient funding for our library WiFi and internal connections. In our largely rural community, many residents visit the library weekly and more frequently to use our public computers, WiFi, and networked printing. We are grateful to the Board of Trustees and Executive Director, Lauren Moore, of the Pioneer Library System in Canandaigua, NY; they have for many years applied for E-Rate funding on behalf of OPL and 41 other libraries in four western New York counties: Wayne, Wyoming, Ontario, and Livingston.

Public access to internet including WiFi is a core community library service in Ontario. Last year we had over 20 daily users of our 9 public computers -- thousands annually. Library staff respond to an average 115 general reference questions every five days on many topics such as local building code, county services, online graphic design tools, school help, and help with government forms, to name only a few. We also support local businesses with on-demand reference—a centralized service available with state funded Internet-accessible databases containing thousands of encyclopedia and business resources otherwise impossible to fund at each library. We deliver small group software training, some sessions in conjunction with our Chamber of Commerce using WiFi; and separately we offer market analysis guidance to people seeking to start a new business.

In our area many employers accept job applications filed exclusively online. With our portable training lab—WiFi based—we still assist users setting up email accounts, and applying for jobs. We have Microsoft Office available to support visitors, parents and others doing committee work, fliers, minutes, fundraising posters after area schools are closed for the day. Students and tutors, together or not use public computers and WiFi on practice examines and other web instructional sites. Parents complete college searches, seek advice on financing higher education, and complete school-related forms. Sometimes they come for the convenience and comfort of the library. **Most times our public telecommunications access is our resident visitor's only access.**

With the commitment of the FCC to ensure a library budget of \$2.30 per square foot, OPL trustees will continue our plan to upgrade network equipment. We are two years into raising funds for a more efficient network. But if we succeed, and cannot fund telecommunication fees, our community will significantly suffer. Please maintain secure funding through the full five year budget period as adopted during the 2014 Modernization. The Ontario, New York residents depend on it.

Sincerely,

Sandra M. Hylen, Director
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