Mary Anne Waltz, M.L.S.

122 Bedford Ct

Voorheesville, NY 12186

In the Matter of:

Wireline Competition Bureau Seeking Comments on E-rate Category Two

WC Docket No. 13-184

I am pleased to be able to provide input on the impact of having access to secure and sufficient funding for our New York public libraries’ WiFi and internal connections. Before the E-rate Modernization in 2014, virtually no libraries received funds for then, Priority 2 services. Unless we were at a 90% discount rate, we could assume there would be no funding left after all requests for internet access were funded. USAC data shows that most libraries are eligible for a 70% discount or less and according to the American Library Association, many libraries stopped bothering to apply for WiFi funding.

In communities across New York, people turn to our libraries to use WiFi on their tablets, laptops, and other devices. Library users are downloading job applications, applying for financial aid, seeking health information, and communicating with family - all dependent on a strong WiFi signal. Increasingly, libraries also provide services that depend on WiFi, like coding clubs for K-12 youth. Libraries everywhere know WiFi throughout the library is not a “nice to have” - it's a core community service.

With the commitment of the FCC to ensure a library budget of $2.30 ($5.00 for a selected category of larger urban and suburban libraries) per square foot, libraries can finally upgrade outdated equipment or plan for new construction. They have confidence that desperately needed support will be there.

Category Two funding is essential to public libraries in New York State.