**In the Matter of:**

Wireline Competition Bureau ) WC Docket No. 13-184

Seeking Comments on E-rate Category Two )

We are pleased to provide reply comments on the impact of having access to secure and sufficient funding for our library WiFi and internal connections. We echo the call to the FCC of more than 140 libraries to ensure a fully funded and stable E-rate program, including maintaining the category two (C2) budget system for libraries. Comments submitted to the FCC came from small rural libraries, suburban libraries, and large urban libraries, all of which indicate they depend on the E-rate program to provide internet access as a core community service.

Before the E-rate Modernization in 2014, virtually no libraries received funds for what were then called Priority 2 services. Comments filed in response to this Public Notice indicate libraries are taking advantage of the C2 funding made available through the Modernization. We support the points made by the American Library Association (ALA) that underscore that it is premature for the FCC to make changes to the budget system given that we are midstream in the five-year C2 system. We also support the recommendations made by ALA to make it easier and more streamlined for libraries to apply for C2 funding.

In communities across the country, people turn to the library to use our 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 K12 youth. Libraries everywhere know WiFi throughout the library is not a “nice to have” - it’s a core community service.

As an illustration, in the Huntington Memorial Library in the small city of Oneonta, NY, WiFi access is available throughout the library and includes the 3rd-floor Community Room, which I have personally used for community phone-a-thons and media-heavy meetings, but it’s often hard to schedule a new meeting! That Community Room is chock full of meetings for 3D design and build workshops, entrepreneurial workshops, after-school adventure learning sessions, genealogy searching seminars, gaming evenings, an antique appraisal program, etc. All of those workshops, seminars, programs, meetings, and sessions are either heavily dependent on excellent WiFi throughput and coverage, or are much more effective for having dependable WiFi services in the Community Room. In the rest of the library, there are people applying for jobs online, resolving online account and credit issues, communicating with family members, investigating health and wellness concerns, simply taking care of any number of everyday and special needs.

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.

It is clear from library comments filed, that the FCC should maintain secure funding through the full five-year budget period as adopted during the 2014 Modernization. Our communities depend on that funding.