Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the impact of having access to secure and sufficient funding for Wi-Fi and internet connections for our nation's 17,000+ public libraries and 80,000+ public school libraries. I am writing on behalf of the Young Adult Library Services Association, a national association of librarians, library workers and advocates whose mission is to expand and strengthen library services for teens, aged 12-18. The E-Rate program, which provides broadband Internet to schools and libraries, is critical to assuring digital equity for all families and youth in the U.S, especially for those who live in low-income communities and rural communities. Across the country, our nation's 42+ million teens turn to their school and public libraries to use Wi-Fi on library computers, personal tablets, laptops, and other devices, or devices they borrow from libraries. Teens are completing school assignments, researching issues of importance to their lives, seeking college and career information, applying for financial aid and for jobs, communicating with mentors, and using technology to create art, music, and more. Many states, such as North Carolina, have moved to digital textbooks thus requiring students to have access to technology in order to simply do their homework and prepare for tests. These critical activities are all dependent on a strong Wi-Fi signal. Increasingly, libraries also provide STEM programs that depend on Wi-Fi, like coding and robotics clubs for teens, that help youth build critical skills for the 21st century workforce. Americans everywhere know Wi-Fi throughout the library is not just "nice to have" – it is a critical need. A 2016 report by Rutgers University and the Joan Ganz Cooney Center, "Opportunity for All?" revealed that low-income families have an access gap to digital technologies and reliable, high-speed Internet access. The report indicated that the main reason some families do not have home computers or Internet access at home is because they cannot afford it, and discounted Internet programs are reaching very few homes. Youth in these families depend on libraries to fill that gap, a finding the authors of the report say points to the success of the FCC's E-Rate program in closing the gap in stud ents' access to the Internet. 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—especially small and rural ones—can finally upgrade outdated equipment or plan for new construction. Community leaders will be confident that desperately needed funding will be there to allow them to meet the needs of all youth who live in their communities and to finally close the digital equity gap. Please maintain secure funding through the full five-year budget period as adopted during the 2014 Modernization. Our nation's youth, especially youth in rural and low-income communities, depend on that funding. Thank you for your time