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April 17, 2019

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

WC Docket No. 10-90 & WC Docket No. 18-213

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Tuesday, April 16, 2019 Ted Koerner, Senior Vice President, Communications Banking Group and I met with Jamie Susskind, Chief of Staff, Commissioner Brendan Carr. We provided an update on CoBank's financial performance, our role in lending to rural broadband providers and distributed [CoBank's 2018 Annual Report](#) and [Corporate Social Responsibility Report](#).

The discussion centered primarily on the creation of the Rural Telehealth Initiative to replicate the successful telehealth pilot program CoBank sponsored in rural Southwest Georgia and the lessons learned. The Georgia pilot program demonstrated that using telehealth to provide a model of continuous care connecting rural patients to their local providers benefits the community by decreasing health care costs, improves the quality of life of rural patients and improves the engagement between healthcare providers and their patients. The first pilot concludes that rural patients with Type 2 diabetes can reduce federal healthcare costs by up to \$3,855 per patient, per year using telehealth. This healthcare saving provides another policy rationale to support universal broadband to all Americans. CoBank is sponsoring the Rural Telehealth Initiative in partnership with the WTA Foundation and Perry Health to replicate the pilot program in other rural communities. The report on the Rural Telehealth Initiative is attached.

We also mentioned CoBank's support of the Precision Agriculture Connectivity Act and the importance of broadband connectivity to cropland for precision agriculture.

Sincerely,

Sarah B. Tyree
Vice President, Policy and Public Affairs

Attachments:

The Value of Broadband: Increasing the Quality of Healthcare in Rural Communities

cc: Jamie Susskind