Request for Reconsideration for Hale County Library (RE: 02-6, Application# 181042619)

I am asking for reconsideration on a Form 471 “Waiver Request” submitted to the FCC on April 23, 2018.

I believe Hale County Library deserves a waiver for having missed the filing date for Form 471 because the belated filing was directly related to my trying to stop E-rate money for 2017 from being paid to a service provider who was NOT providing Internet service to me. Please understand this effort was certainly to help my library, but also to make sure that I and the service providers in question were compliant with USAC’s rules in seeing that funding was properly allocated.

The problem resulted from a switch I made from one service provider to another to get better service for the money. While trying to end payments to the previous provider, I was paying the provider who actually provided the service. Finally with the help of the current service provider’s E-rate department, I began to get the E-rate money refunded from the company it should not have gone to, so that I could continue to pay the proper service provider.

To achieve this end, between April 2017 and the present, I have exchanged some 55 e-mails and have attempted probably two dozen or more phone calls, not all successful, with the service providers and the USAC in the effort to discover where the 2017 funding was going, how to get it redirected or refunded, and to get that process in motion. I received most of the refund in February, but just this morning, I received an e-mail regarding a refund that is still due and should be sent in a month or so, nearly a year after I discovered the problem.

While trying to resolve this question, two of us, neither working 40 hours a week, were trying to run a small library. As I mentioned in my “Waiver Request,” I have many responsibilities, but I try to keep up with deadlines through the News Briefs from USAC. Apparently, I missed one of those. I have done E-rate for a long time, but deadlines change pretty often. I think the deadlines were rather a lot earlier this year than last. I thought I had more time as I was trying to make sure I waited the required 28 days between the 470 and the 471.

As I explained in the “Waiver Request,” Hale County Library’s budget is very small, and the funding for E-rate is really necessary. Please consider that in trying to make sure I was compliant in regard to where money went and following other rules, I missed the deadline. This was not simply inattention or certainly not lack of need or interest. Please reconsider and help meet the needs of patrons in a small rural library in a high poverty, high unemployment area.

Please contact me if any further information is needed. Thank you for your consideration,

Carolyn Hemstreet

Library Director

Hale County Library

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