



September 5, 2018

Via Electronic Filing

Bill Harvey

Commission Chair
bharvey@bakercounty.org

Commissioner Brendan Carr
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Mark Bennett

Commissioner
mbennett@bakercounty.org

Re: *Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment, WT Docket No. 17-79; Streamlining Deployment of Small Cell Infrastructure by Improving Wireless Siting Policies, WT Docket No. 16-421*

Bruce A. Nichols

Commissioner
bnichols@bakercounty.org

Dear Commissioner Carr:

As County Commissioners in Baker County, Oregon, we urge that the Federal Communications Commission take additional actions to promote wireless broadband services by eliminating regulatory barriers that stand in the way of building the infrastructure that is needed to support those services. The Commission has done a tremendous job to date in promoting broadband, and we urge that you continue these efforts.

Baker County, located in eastern Oregon, has only about 16,000 residents and a population density of only 5.3 persons per square mile. Our primary industries are mining and farming. The citizens of our extremely rural county have much to gain from broadband connectivity and the many advanced services it will deliver. Those new services will boost our economy by attracting new jobs, improve our education system, and support our farming and mining industries.

Wireless broadband can transform our community, but we are concerned that regulatory barriers, including high fees, unreasonable restrictions on deployment, and lengthy siting and application review processes will drain limited capital, impairing investment in rural areas such as Baker County. Constructing broadband networks is capital-intensive, and expending that capital to deploy broadband in urban and suburban areas will leave far less funding available for those networks extremely rural communities like ours. Actions to streamline deployment across the country, and create a more uniform regulatory framework, will reduce deployment costs, generating more investment nationwide, which in turn will directly benefit rural areas such as Baker County.

In sum, wireless broadband will bring many benefits to our families, industries, and economy. We therefore urge the Commission to continue its work to streamline regulations that stand in the way of expanding and improving the availability of wireless broadband across rural America.

Respectfully submitted,

Baker County Board of Commissioners



William "Bill" Harvey, Chairman



Mark E. Bennett, Commissioner



Bruce A. Nichols, Commissioner