



September 25, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W., Room TW-B204
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Reply to Comments by Buckeye Hills Regional Council Regarding the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund WC Docket Nos. 19-126 and 10-90

Madam Secretary:

In reply to comments submitted by the Buckeye Hills Regional Council on September 19, 2019, I fully support the thoughtful approach that Buckeye Hills Regional Council submitted. Our area in Appalachia is especially lacking in broadband/digital support. Even in Athens, home of Ohio University, once a mile outside that perimeter in some directions, the broadband is so limited that you have to subscribe to satellite if that is even available. The costs is horrendous and the services is limited and spotty. With more of our local schools having students do online testing and homework, this has created a huge problem. The local library has hot spots that people can sign out, however the waiting list is long and unreliable. Many families have to travel into the library when it is open, or even sit outside of a restaurant to use their wifi.

Appalachian Ohio often gets overlooked. Our future Workforce is also dependent on our gaining access to digital. Many of the businesses that have sat in on our roundtables have state that a huge issue for them is site size and ability to get broadband. Often, they will leave or only house part of their business here because the broadband access is so poor.

As we begin having to upskill our current workforce so that we stay ahead of automation, these workers will again need broadband at home so that they can complete trainings online.

I hope the policy will reflect underserved and low-income communities being allow first access to these funds. Without this, our future workforce will be hurt.

Thank you,

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