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Snohomish County

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County Council
Terry Ryan, Chair
Nate Nehring, Vice-Chair
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Sam Low

September 3, 2019

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

FCC Mailroom

3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S #609
Everett, WA 98201-4046
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Dear FCC Commissioners,

The Snohomish County Council writes in regard to the urgent need of accurately mapping rural broadband connectivity and addressing these deficiencies. We are encouraged by your ongoing efforts to target broadband expansion through the *Connect America Fund (CAF)* and the *Universal Service Fund* programs and we welcome their deployment into Snohomish County. We were pleased to see the recent announcement of \$3.9 million in CAF broadband funding for the eastern part of Washington state and look forward to Snohomish County being considered in future rounds of support for rural broadband expansion.

Snohomish County shares the federal government's goal of ensuring affordable broadband access for every American. One of our central concerns in achieving that goal is the need for improved accuracy in the mapping of broadband dead zones. Currently, the County is unable to receive appropriate federal support as the existing maps do not accurately reflect our underserved areas and immediate broadband needs. In support of your efforts to more accurately collect and map broadband data across detailed regions of a County we are very much in support of your *Digital Opportunity Data Collection* process and stand ready to partner in this effort however we can. As concluded in your report "...there is a compelling and immediate need to develop more granular broadband deployment data to meet this goal..." and the County is actively participating in the National Association of Counties' (NACo's) TestIt app to help supply additional data points to the exiting maps. We believe there is great need for improved broadband networks across the County and the improved collection of detailed and accurate data will reflect that need.

Additionally, we support Congressional legislative efforts to address the growing issue of limited broadband mapping in concert with the proactive efforts you're already acting on. To that end, we support the bipartisan Broadband Data Improvement Act of 2019 – H.R. 3162 and its Senate counterpart S. 1522. This legislation requires broadband providers to report data to create an improved National Broadband Map that is significantly more accurate and granular, and subject to an

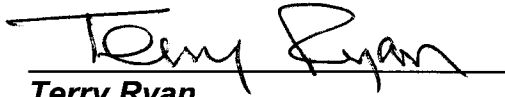
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ongoing and multi-faceted challenge, validation, and refinement process. This data collection will help close the remaining coverage gaps and track areas where federal dollars have resulted in actual broadband buildout. We believe efforts at the FCC to foster elements of this legislation and support it in Congress will help improve our shared goals of expanding broadband to all underserved areas. In conclusion, we look forward to working with the FCC to responsibly and equitably deploy access to broadband networks and to develop an accurate map of underserved areas. Consider Snohomish County a partner and advocate in our shared mission as we all work together to expand broadband networks across the country.

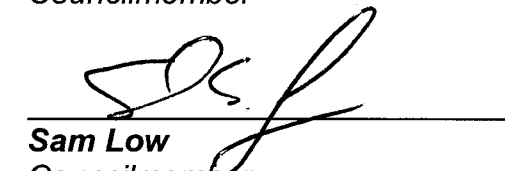
Sincerely,




Terry Ryan
Council Chair



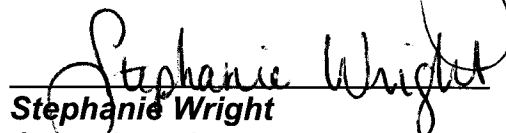
Brian Sullivan
Councilmember



Sam Low
Councilmember



Nate Nehring
Council Vice-Chair



Stephanie Wright
Councilmember

cc: Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Congressman Rick Larsen
Congresswoman Suzan DelBene