

Diane Smith

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November 28, 2017

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: REBECCA MANNA, Letter of Support for nomination to serve on the Rural Health Committee,  
Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors

Dear Ms. Dortch,

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of Rebecca Manna's nomination to serve on the USAC Board of Directors Rural Health Committee. After a career in telecommunications and public policy, I moved from Washington, DC to northwest Montana 15 years ago. It was in Montana that I built a career as a successful technology CEO/entrepreneur and subsequently became an investor, author, board member of for-profit and not-for-profit entities and, most importantly, an advocate for rural and small town technology and economic development.

As a result of my work in technology and rural development, I have had the privilege of advising Rebecca's employer, Kalispell Regional Healthcare. KRH is not only a critical player in the health of hundreds of thousands of patients; it is also a profoundly important part of the economy of northwest Montana. Rebecca's willingness to think innovatively about and deploy creative technology solutions in our unserved and underserved communities have been of enormous value both to KRH and to the rural and small town communities it serves. That is how I know she will be a great asset as a member of the Rural Health Committee of the USAC Board of Directors.

Of the 19,509 incorporated places in the U.S., 76% of them (14,819) had fewer than 5,000 people in 2014. Only about 3.8% of them had a population of 50,000 or more. Those of us who live in less populated places are keenly aware that our small communities are home to entrepreneurs, technologists, veterans, farmers, environmental stewards, and families of all kinds. We are bound together by a way of life and a hope for its future. While often unsung, the work of USAC is vital to the well-being of those of us who choose to live in America's less populated places. Appointing Rebecca Manna to the Rural Health Committee of the USAC Board will help ensure that rural and small town America have the opportunity to prosper in the coming years.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information at [dismith234@gmail.com](mailto:dismith234@gmail.com) or 406-250-4328. Thank you for your consideration.

All the best,



Diane Smith, Esq.