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## United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma

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April 20, 2015

Chairman Tom Wheeler  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Subject: Rural Broadband Services Corporation's "Application for Review"

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

On Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup> members of your Staff and Representatives of the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) met with Rural Broadband Services Corporation, (RBSC). RBSC was allowed the time to provide a detailed briefing explaining the many benefits of its Proposal providing advanced telecommunication capacity to over 200,000 people living on Tribal lands in northeastern Oklahoma.

The United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, (UKB), has consummated an Agreement with RBSC specifying the Tribe's role as significant by incorporating certain responsibilities to assure the timely completion of the network. The Agreement also provides that the Tribe will enjoy an active role promoting and ensuring services, proposed by RBSC in its FCC Rural Broadband Experiment (RBE) Application, will be delivered to commercial and residential customers on Tribal lands. Further the agreement stipulates the training of Cherokee citizens to be placed in the technical jobs throughout the hierarchy so that the UKB can be prepared to exercise the opportunity to assume complete control of the network after ten years.

I have reviewed many of your recent letters to United States Senators and Congressman, which so eloquently express your commitment to eliminate any further oppression by resolving the digital divide between Native Americans in Indian Country, who have been disproportionately bypassed by the Internet revolution, and Main Street America. You stated in many of these letters "This is why expanding high-speed broadband connectivity into all corners of the country, including into Tribal lands, **is a top priority** of the FCC."

Finally, during an FCC Break out Workshop, at the 2015 Winter Conference of the National Congress of American Indians, in Washington D.C., representatives from the FCC portrayed that the Commission is committed to developing broadband connectivity throughout Indian Country and agreed that the elimination of this disproportional digital divide, typically found on Tribal lands, is in the best public interest!

RBSC's proposal exemplifies the standard that Tribes want to see developed throughout Indian Country. For the FCC, the timing of this opportunity is impeccable, as both the Executive and Legislative Branches are posturing toward their own resolves for the development of rural broadband connectivity. RBSC's Model is the perfect opportunity for the Commission to accumulate current data under the grace of an Experimental Program, which provides the latitude to flex and evolve when better solutions are discovered as the project moves toward an equitable solution for all concerned.

I ask that the Commission accept RBSC's Application for Review and grant RBSC's waiver request and to reinstate RBSC into the RBE program. I sincerely pray that this Commission will not allow the Rural Broadband Experiment to become another failed federal program, which is added to the list of broken promises.

Sincerely,

  
George Wickliffe,  
Chief

Cc: The Honorable Jim Inhofe  
The Honorable Tom Cole  
The Honorable Jim Bridenstine  
The Honorable James Lankford  
The Honorable Markwayne Mullin  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel  
Commissioner Ajit Pai  
Commissioner Michael O'Rielly  
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