

June 24, 2015

The Honorable Tom Wheeler  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket No. 13-5, Technology Transitions; GN Docket No. 12-353, AT&T Petition to Launch a Proceeding Concerning the TDM-to-IP Transition; WC Docket No. 05-25, Special Access for Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers.

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

In our 200 years in operation, Jim Beam has learned a thing or two about the three “b’s,” bourbon, brands and business. I write this letter today to address a fourth “b,” one that is pivotal to our continued growth in each of those areas: broadband.

Jim Beam is the world’s number one Kentucky bourbon. Seven generations have worked through world wars, the Great Depression and a pesky little thing called Prohibition to reach this level of success. Our global brands include Makers Mark, Bookers, Suarez and Hornitos tequila and many more. Jim Beam has also grown internationally acquiring French icon Courvoisier and merging with Suntory, the number one whisky distiller in Japan.

To manage this global effort, Beam relies on a network of communication services, tailored to fit the diverse demands of our locations. Competition plays a key role in our ability to choose an Internet and voice provider who can deliver excellence in customer service, link our employees and connect our global supply chain to the customers around the world who love our products.

Much of the business operation for Jim Beam is managed from our corporate headquarters in Deerfield, IL, where we have chosen a competitive broadband service provider for our voice and data needs.

Our distilleries remain the heart and soul of our operation. They include our Jim Beam distillery in Clermont, KY and Markers Mark facility in Loretto, KY. We depend on a hybrid of broadband services at these distilleries, including both offerings from large incumbent providers, and the services of smaller competitive providers for Internet and voice products.

As the power of our brands have grown, our Kentucky home has become more than a point of production and distribution, we have evolved into a destination location for friends, visitors and fans. Recently we opened the American Stillhouse in Clermont, following in the footsteps of our successful Jim Beam destination location in downtown Louisville, KY at 4Th Street Live. This location, which includes retail center and a restaurant, is powered by a competitive provider’s services.

Broadband plays a role in supplying ingredients for production, orders, stocking, and shipping. At our headquarters we have staffing, hiring, accounting and financial management needs. But we also rely on heavy bandwidth to review large art and video concept files, which form the core of our advertising campaigns. We also require seamless voice and video conferencing services to coordinate with our coworkers and partners in France and Japan.

The competitive networks that help power Jim Beam are carefully selected and curated to fit our needs. The technology transition, moving networks from traditional TDM based platforms to advanced IP and fiber connections will be of benefit to our business and our community if equivalent access for competition is maintained.

Hopefully this provides you with a snapshot of the complexity, and multiple uses of broadband on which Jim Beam relies. All business, large and small, local and global benefit from having more choice in broadband service providers. It drives customer service up and drives prices down. In the case of Jim Beam, broadband is a brand builder and competition has been part of our recipe for success.

Sincerely,



Ken Breyer,  
Jim Beam

cc: Commissioner Mignon Clyburn

Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel

Commissioner Ajit Pai

Commissioner Michael O'Rielly

Jonathan Sallet

Matthew DelNero

Howard Symons

GiGi Sohn