

**To: Federal Communication Commission (FCC)**

**From: Mark Gasaway, President, AADB**

**Date: July 27, 2015**

**Subject: Proposal for NDBEDP Rule-making**

**This commenting process for the NDBEDP permanent program rule making process is written with the following topics in mind. These topics are critical in the community and need to be brought up to the FCC's attention. This is to help the FCC know what the community believes is best for the community.**

**Redefining the poverty level and income verification:**

**The poverty level of the NDBEDP should go through a redefining process because there are some instances in the equipment distribution phase where some individuals who are DeafBlind are being turned down because they may be above the poverty level and thus become ineligible. The DeafBlind community needs to be represented in a fair way and it seems the poverty level does hinder fairness based on how much income a certain individual may have because they may hold a job or their income level is sufficiently higher than most other DeafBlind in the community. It is the position of AADB that the poverty level should be adjusted or changed in the NDBEDP. The DeafBlind community. DeafBlind people who earn more than allowed are not eligible. Yet these individuals are expected**

**to pay thousands of dollars for accessible equipment, for more than the sighted hearing population, most of whom earn much more money than DeafBlind individuals do. Many DeafBlind cannot afford these high costs, even with a paying job.**

**The income verification process also needs to be adjusted or changed. As it may stand now, there is a process of sending or showing proof of one's monthly or yearly income and then the ICanConnect (ICC) staff makes a decision on whether or not an individual is eligible. A certain verification process is needed that will attempt to keep confidential information confidential. There is also a need to create a better income verification.**

**There is also a need to ease restraints on what equipment can be given to the DeafBlind individual and there should be an evaluation process that will help the DeafBlind person make a choice that is right for them.**

**One more thing here and that is that there needs to be a main national office that oversees the NDBEDP program and not continue to use HKNC and the Perkins school. This will help states be able to help the community better with better training and technical solutions.**