

July 8, 2008

Dear Chairman Martin:

I write to urge you to consider a cooperative, public-private approach to mapping national broadband availability.

As director of the Green River Area Development District (GRADD) in western Kentucky, I have been part of a remarkable regional project that is now culminating in a broadband wireless network that spans seven rural counties – an area roughly the size of Delaware. This project, named ConnectGRADD, is led by the seven county judge executives of the region, and was undertaken to help bridge the urban-rural digital divide by expanding affordable, high-speed broadband access to our rural residents.

Chip Spann, and other staff members from ConnectKentucky, provided valuable assistance in helping us develop an RFP for network construction and service provision. Mr. Spann served on a local committee that made the recommendation to our Selection Committee; his knowledge of wireless technology was invaluable in providing the local Judge Executives a level of confidence in the winning proposal. Ultimately the winning bid came from a collaborative effort between Digital Connections Inc (DCI) and Cinergy Communications. Mr. Spann continued to consult during the contract negotiations with the winning bidders.

As you and your colleagues at the FCC work to develop national broadband policies, I encourage you to find creative ways that you could use the ConnectKentucky model.

Thank you for your work to ensure all Americans have access to broadband. I believe that ConnectGRADD proves that this goal is possible, if we work together to make it happen.

Respectfully,

Jiten Shah
Executive Director

Green River Area Development District

cc:

Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

Commissioner Michael Copps

Commissioner Robert McDowell

Commissioner Deborah Tate