

January 31, 2011

Ms. Sharon Gillett, Chief
Wireline Competition Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Reference: Docket No. 02-60

Dr. Ms. Gillett:

This letter is to request a one-year extension to encumber the Rural Health Care Pilot Program funds for the Virginia Acute Stroke Telehealth (VAST) Network from June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2012. We are also requesting a one-year extension of the five year period to invoice USAC from the date of the first Funding Commitment Letter..

The VAST network has been working diligently with health care providers throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia to design and develop organizational relationship and technical infrastructure of the VAST. Much progress has been made in establishing the cooperative agreements and working relationship. Similarly to other FCC Pilot networks, the VAST involves several independent and diverse government organizations and health care providers each with differing telecommunication needs, administrative and procurement requirements and processes.

The project is currently finalizing the competitive bidding documents and Sustainability Plan. Additional time would enable us to further investigate potential opportunities for improving the network design, efficiency and cost savings.

Although much progress has been made, a one-year extension is required to ensure maximization of resources, continued coordination with the several telecommunication infrastructure initiatives and also enable the VAST to work through some of the eligibility issues that have been put on hold in order to move the project forward. Additional time will ensure optimal use of the FCC Pilot Program funding and to better meet the needs of the Health Care Providers in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

We sincerely appreciate your kind consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Eugene V Sullivan
Program Manager
Virginia Acute Stroke Telehealth Network