

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

{Insert Month/Date}, 2013

Dear Sir/Madame,

I am writing today in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which, among other things, proposes changes to the E-Rate program. Before delving into my response to the proposed changes, I want to first thank the FCC for your continued support for the E-Rate program. The E-Rate program provides critical discounts to assist schools (like mine) to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access.

The Macon County R-IV School District, in New Cambria, Missouri, is a very small and rural school district in the northeast part of the state. The district is mostly agricultural and has very little local tax base in terms of commercial properties. The district utilizes the majority of the E-Rate budget for internet connectivity through the statewide program, MoreNet. Not only does this service provide a T1 connection, MoreNet also provides the district with supplemental services that it would otherwise not receive.

The E-Rate program is a program succeeding in its mission. As the FCC moves forward with this NPRM, it is prudent to remain focused on the fact that E-Rate is a program that works and that any changes to the E-Rate program should be focused on expanding a successful program that has yet to reach its full potential. The current program, while needing some marginal updates to its structure, is most strained by increasing demand for E-Rate-supported services and persistently low funding. The single most effective step the FCC can take to bolster E-Rates current and future success is to provide \$5 billion in funding, an amount commensurate with current demand.

There are additional programmatic changes and restructuring that can provide additional efficiencies and savings. To rely solely on programmatic efficiencies, however, without providing additional new funding is a shortsighted solution, a policy that fails to address the program's most significant problem: inadequate funding.

I think this NPRM is an opportunity to tackle the important work of expanding a successful program. E-Rate is not a broken program that needs to be fixed; it is a successful program that schools and libraries continue to rely on, a program that must continue to provide funding critical for telecommunications and connectivity.

The loss of or reduction in funding of the E-Rate program would be devastating to the Macon County R-IV district. Our students do not have the ability to visit businesses or interact in ways that urban student can. Our students interact with the world through our internet connection and this opens up a variety of experiences that would not be available otherwise. With high school instructors not being able to offer dual credit coursework to our students that avenue is only open through interactive classes with universities and community colleges through the internet connection. Reduction in funding would definitely jeopardize the ability of our students to get a head start on higher education that E-Rate funding provides.

Thank you for considering my response as you move forward with your decision on the E-Rate program. I applaud the FCC for its continued efforts to protect the already oversubscribed E-Rate program by ensuring the future of this successful program. I urge you to support significant increased funding for the E-Rate program, and to ensure that the program and its limited resources are protected and preserved.

Sincerely,

John Dunham
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