

"Modernizing the E-Rate program to allow rural community colleges to apply for funding support would provide considerable direct aid to institutions like New River Community and Technical College so that the institution would be able to affordably upgrade Internet infrastructure and better provide modern, high-speed, reliable internet access for the modern age. Expanding broadband accessibility within our rural service area would vastly enhance educational opportunities available to both post-secondary students and K-12 students in our communities and would benefit the region as a whole. Community colleges are a key bridge to higher education and economic opportunity for hundreds of thousands of students nationwide. Throughout rural America these colleges are often the sole provider of many services ranging from basic education and skills training to remediation training that prepares one for entrance into higher education.

Thank you for considering our comments on this vital issue that will shape the future of education for rural America.

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