



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

**Pat Quinn**  
GOVERNOR

November 18, 2013

Linda Oliver  
Deputy Chief, Telecommunications Access Policy Division  
Wireline Competition Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Deputy Chief Oliver,

In the last few years, the State of Illinois was instrumental in the creation of the Illinois Rural HealthNet by supplying most of the required match for this Pilot Program of the FCC's Rural Health Care funding mechanism. I am pleased to report that IRHN has created a statewide fiber network that provides 100Mbps and 1Gbps services to rural hospitals, allowing them to transmit diagnostic and imaging data so that patients can be treated in their communities and yet still benefit from specialists' care.

Roger Holloway, President and CEO of IRHN, has informed me that IRHN is submitting two appeals to the FCC, and with this letter I am demonstrating my support for IRHN's requests. The two appeals deal with similar issues, the denial of Healthcare Connect Fund eligibility for health clinics located in areas that have been ruled urban by USAC. It is important to note that a significant amount of health care treatment is performed on an outpatient basis at health clinics such as the ones that recently were denied eligibility by USAC. These clinics are often the final and vital link in bringing improved health care to at-risk populations.

One of the IRHN appeals will make the point that some of IRHN's so-called urban clinics are located in areas that, according to a majority of rural/urban indicators, are rural. The other appeal deals with a classification of community health centers that allows, in the HCF, only for Federally Qualified Health Centers to be eligible. Given that the health clinics in question are outreach departments of eligible not-for-profit hospitals, it seems counter to the intent of the universal service rural health care process to deny the benefits of broadband to locations that allow wider access to improved health care to communities in need.

Finally, I would add that IRHN has succeeded in creating a viable, fiber optic healthcare backbone that reaches most areas of Illinois. The impact of this backbone will increase ever more dramatically as additional clinics are added to the connection, thus bringing improved access to healthcare to wider populations. It would be unfortunate, now that the backbone is in place and many hospitals are connected, to deny that benefit to hospital clinics, which carry out much of the health care treatment for at-risk individuals.

In closing, I ask you to give strong consideration to IRHN's appeals, which will, if granted, make the benefits of improved health care available to a greater number of Illinois residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Quinn".

Pat Quinn  
Governor

cc: Roger L. Holloway  
President/CEO Illinois Rural HealthNet  
Sincerely,