



What do you want to know?

**Waller McGuire**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1415 Olive Street  
St. Louis, MO  
63103+2315  
314.539.0300  
FAX 314.241.3840  
wmcguire@slpl.org  
slpl.org

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

July 2, 2014

Dear Mr. Chairman and Commissioners:

St. Louis Public Library has been an active participant in the E-Rate program since its inception and our patrons have benefited greatly. As the FCC considers significant changes in the proposed modernization of the E-Rate Program, we respectfully submits this letter supporting the Urban Libraries Council's recommendation that libraries should be allowed to choose between two methods for determining E-rate funding for internal connections:

- 1) Fund public libraries at the rate of no less than \$4 per square foot;
- 2) Fund public libraries at the rate of \$150 per average daily visitor.

Public Libraries need to be able to choose the method that best suits their environment. In general, urban libraries are more crowded and serve many more patrons in smaller spaces than our suburban or rural counterparts. Urban library patrons often have no other practical way to obtain access to the Internet for seeking employment, education, e-government, personal business, or participation in society. Using square footage alone is unfair to urban libraries, and to our patrons who are disproportionately low-income, unemployed, or underemployed

St. Louis Public Library is investing in upgrading the internal network connections at all of our 17 locations. Wi-Fi is essential for our urban patrons. Increasingly, users are bringing their own devices into our buildings for downloading our material, engaging in employment-related activities, researching medical concerns, participating in educational and training sessions, and doing their course work. In addition, many public libraries, including our own, are providing more and more wireless devices for use by patrons to meet the demands of an urban population that cannot afford to purchase such devices on their own. Library staff members are increasingly using Wi-Fi and mobile devices to assist patrons.

St. Louis taxpayers have willingly invested millions in providing connectivity to citizens through their Library, using the E-Rate program as a vital partner. We sincerely hope that the FCC, through the E-Rate Program, will support public libraries working to deliver what is typically the only free public Internet access available to the community.

Very truly yours,

Waller McGuire  
Executive Director

**Mission Statement**

The St. Louis Public Library  
will provide learning  
resources and information  
services that support and  
improve individual, family,  
and community life.