



P.O. Box 30924
Raleigh, NC 27622
919-760-7825
rossholmesgroup.com

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

August 29, 2014

***Re: Electric Power Board and City of Wilson Petitions to Preempt State Laws on Municipal
Broadband: WCB Docket Nos. 14-115 and 14-116.***

Dear Chairman Wheeler and Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai and O’Rielly:

The purpose of this letter is to ask that you oppose Wilson, N.C.’s petition to circumvent a North Carolina state law concerning municipal broadband networks.

As the former head of North Carolina’s Employment Security Commission, I am intimately familiar with the challenges faced by our state’s job seekers, particularly those in the African American community. In that role and my current one in the private sector, I have worked with local communities as they try to attract new companies to their area. I understand supporters of municipal broadband argue these networks boost job growth in their regions, but there is no clear evidence to prove this assertion is true.

There is evidence that municipal networks keep other broadband providers from moving into communities. At least two private providers around Chattanooga, Tenn., Wilson N.C.’s co-petitioner, have said the city network has either kept them from servicing Chattanooga or would keep them from expanding if the Electric Power Board is allowed to move past the boundaries set for it by Tennessee state law.

The North Carolina legislature put a law into place to protect our economy and promote employment by setting a fair playing field between private and public broadband networks. I ask that you honor the intent of this law and deny Wilson, N.C.’s request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn Holmes', is written over a horizontal line.

Lynn Holmes
Former Chair, Employment Security Commission of North Carolina