



To Whom This Concerns,

I am the managing partner of New Era Broadband, LLC. We are a Wireless Internet Service Provider operating in the Appalachian counties of Southeast Ohio and West Central West Virginia. The main reason I formed this company two years ago is because of my frustration in getting broadband Internet access to my home office. For over seven years, I battled the area Telco's and cable operators, and lost. My only choice was satellite, which for a web programmer was nearly as bad as dial-up. Finally, I approached a couple of potential business partners and New Era was formed.

Needless to say, it is a real challenge to bring wireless services into the extreme terrain of the Appalachian counties of Ohio and West Virginia. And if terrain were not the issue, finding adequate supplies of affordable backhaul bandwidth are almost a killer. Just this month, my provider was completely down for seventeen days! How am I supposed to serve customers with that kind of service? And, as you can imagine, cash for infrastructure is always an issue.

We would like to suggest that monies be made available to bring in fiber backhaul, without matching restrictions. We can work with providers such as Zayo Bandwidth, Time Warner and others, to bring fiber connections. But at this time, it's simply cost prohibitive for a small operation like us. But grants to cover the cost of construction of fiber connections would allow us to utilize existing water towers, MARCS towers and other structures upon which we can place access points. There are many of these structures available, but getting backhaul connections to them is a real issue.

We believe that if non-matched NTIA funds are available for use by operators to install backhaul bandwidth, you will realize your goals of rural broadband at a hugely accelerated pace.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Kindest Regards,
David Hannum
New Era Broadband, LLC