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Subject: Attn: Broadband Opportunity Council
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Regarding <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/press-release/2015/broadband-opportunity-council-seeks-comment>

I am a resident in the Strowd Mountain subdivision of Pittsboro, NC. We are 3.5 miles outside of Chapel Hill. This stretch contains 5 subdivisions and 200+ homes, plus thousands of surrounding acres available to be developed.

Our incumbent provider is ATT. ATT grossly misrepresents (falsely advertises) the options available in this region and they are not being held accountable. Our only internet option is DSL and the average speed is in the 1-2 mbps range. If you are a new homeowner, ATT no longer offers service because they are over capacity and they only have plans to migrate one subdivision (not mine) to fiber over the next few years. After having logged many FTC and FCC complaints via organized community actions, there is still no indication when the rest of this region will be upgraded and they continue to falsely advertise services. Not even their construction manager, Shane Burns, knows. People are purchasing houses based on this misrepresentation.

This dearth of modern technology is causing real estate transactions to terminate once prospective buyers learn the truth about what is available here. No businesses will come here and we are centrally located to Research Triangle Park, UNC, Duke, Chapel Hill, Raleigh and Chatham Park, all within a 15-45 minute drive. The lack of adequate Internet is the single cause of discontent in this region. Homes just a few miles down the road in Chapel Hill are valued 30-50% higher for equivalent or lesser quality construction on comparable or smaller lots. Yet, taxes are much higher there and people are willing to pay that. Schools are rated equally so that's not a factor. Our property value is going to continue to be impacted negatively unless something changes.

People are moving out simply because internet options are not changing. Kids can't complete homework assignments unless they do the work on walmart wifi. Family can't skype with distant relatives. Professionals are unable to work from home. Security cameras can't record to the cloud.

I have worked out cost figures with Time Warner Cable to bring construction to the 5 subdivisions in my surrounding area. However, they are unwilling to absorb any of the \$320K construction cost. Packages they offer require 100% commitment and are unrealistic.

Even when isolating a package to my subdivision only (22 houses valued in the 400-900K range), it was still impossible to get a 100% commitment.

Even though we are an area that should unquestionably be allocated CAF, we are not eligible due to the size of the census blocks and false reporting by providers like ATT.

Commenting on the specific questions:

How can the federal government best promote coordination and use of federally-funded broadband assets?

-The size of the census blocks needs to change.

-The facility for disputing coverage needs to be revamped, making it more user-friendly. There should be follow to better understand our position.

-The federal government needs to coordinate with county representatives in regard to accuracy of the CAF maps and communities truly in need, not those already being serviced. This coordination can happen at the congressman or county commissioner level. It needs to be part of due diligence considering it's my tax dollars at stake. My congressman is David Price and I have been assisted by a rep in his office, Sean Maxwell, Legislative Assistant of Telecommunications. However, it is clear his voice is limited and multiple queries to the FCC have taken months for any kind of response.

What regulatory barriers exist within the agencies of the Executive Branch to the deployment of broadband infrastructure?

-I may not know enough about regulatory barriers, but Republicans are obviously a barrier. They support publicly traded businesses, not citizens. If a community is in favor of net neutrality, the NC Attorney General, namely Roy Cooper, should have no right to expend tax dollars fighting it when that money could clearly be used in better ways. If providers are unwilling to expand in an area, the government should be allowed to assist in the creation of municipal broadband. ATT is arrogant and insensitive to our concerns. When pressed that they should lower the cost of mobile data services where no other adequate options are available, they state, "there's no rate regulation so we don't have to do that". This mentality allows them to charge the same rates for inadequate service as they do for higher speed service. As a result, there's no incentive for them to upgrade infrastructure.

Are there specific regulations within the agencies of the Executive Branch that impede or restrict competition for broadband service?

-CAF funding should be up for grabs. There's too much red tape around the incumbent provider when they are not willing to do anything. I spoke with CenturyLink in attempt to work with them on a plan for my region, which I have tremendous detail on, but they flat out said no because "that's ATT's area". How can any provider be allowed to "own" an area in this way? This enables the arrogance on the part of the incumbent provider.

-I don't see any reason why an 'incumbent' provider should get preferential treatment on the CAF funding. In fact, if they haven't already stepped up to provide service in the first place, I'd rather see it go to another provider first to promote competition and lower rates.

How can communities and regions incentivize service providers to offer broadband

services, either wired or wireless, in rural and remote areas?

- Tax write-offs for the construction.
- Local government can embed the cost of construction into the taxes for several years after a special vote. No vote is not counted.
- Free use of county land for a limited period of time or permanent if it's used to house necessary infrastructure.
- County funded towers.
- Use of tax dollars. So much of our tax dollars are spent frivolously. I'd like to see it go to broadband. Just recently, 300K was spent on a bathroom renovation at a park. That could have provided nearly the full amount needed to bring Time Warner Cable to the subdivisions in my community, servicing hundreds of users, potentially thousands in future, at the cost of \$1800 per existing house. This is not a possibility today due to legal regulations.

What can the federal government do to make it easier for state, local, and tribal governments or organizations to access funding for broadband?

- Speaking from first-hand experience, it took many months just to get answers on how the CAF is allocated. That was with my congressman's office asking the questions. This is unacceptable. I had a provider, TWC, with construction plans and costs ready to go and it still took months to get a response from the FCC. There's no excuse for that. I still haven't been able to get a commitment on CAF dollars when this area fits the definition for requirements. I don't even know that it's on anyone's radar. There's no accountability and there's no clear way for a tax payer to voice concerns, discrepancies and conflicts of interest. It's a black hole.
- A fund should be available for municipal broadband where providers are unwilling to extend adequate service. With a proper plan in place, these funds should be granted.
- Remove the incumbent provider restriction on CAF.

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