**Comment:** Windstream’s data conclusively establish that the proposed funded service area does not qualify as an underserved area. Windstream offers facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service (meeting the definition set forth in the Notice of Funds Availability) to households in the proposed funded service area, and such households can readily subscribe to Windstream’s broadband service upon request. Data regarding these broadband offerings, detailed below, establish that the proposed funded service area cannot meet all of the three prongs of the “underserved area” test.

Windstream is a communications and entertainment company with more than 1 million broadband customers in 16 states. Investing more than $200 million in broadband deployment over the last several years, Windstream now offers approximately 89% of its 3 million voice customers access to quality and affordable broadband service.

The agencies define an “underserved area” as follows: “Underserved area means a proposed funded service area, composed of one or more contiguous census blocks meeting certain criteria that measure the availability of broadband service and the level of advertised broadband speeds. These criteria conform to the two distinct components of the Broadband Infrastructure category of eligible projects: Last Mile and Middle Mile. Specifically, a proposed funded service area may qualify as underserved for last mile projects if at least one of the following factors is met, though the presumption will be that more than one factor is present: 1. No more than 50 percent of the households in the proposed funded service area have access to facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service at greater than the minimum broadband transmission speed (set forth in the definition of broadband above); 2. No fixed or mobile broadband service provider advertises broadband transmission speeds of at least three megabits per second (‘’mbps’’) downstream in the proposed funded service area; or 3. The rate of broadband subscribership for the proposed funded service area is 40 percent of households or less. A proposed funded service area may qualify as underserved for Middle Mile projects if one interconnection point terminates in a proposed funded service area that qualifies as unserved or underserved for Last Mile projects.”