Applicant Name: Lakeview Cable TV, Inc.

Public Notice Submissions

Service Area: Lakeview Cable, Inc.

Submitter: Windstream

Comment: Windstream’s data strongly suggest that the proposed funded service area likely does not qualify as an unserved area. Windstream offers facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service at advertised speeds of greater than 768 kbps downstream and 200 kbps upstream to some of the households within the proposed funded service area, and such households can readily subscribe to Windstream’s broadband service upon request. Windstream also has reason to believe that competitive broadband offerings are available in exchanges overlapping the proposed funded service area. Given this information, agency officials should further investigate existing broadband offerings within the proposed funded service area, so that officials can be sure that the area, in fact, qualifies as unserved.

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 “unserved area” as follows: “Unserved area means a proposed funded service area, composed of one or more contiguous census blocks, where at least 90 percent of households in the proposed funded service area lack access to facilities-based, terrestrial broadband service, either fixed or mobile, at the minimum broadband transmission speed (set forth in the definition of broadband above). A household has access to broadband service if the household can readily subscribe to that service upon request.”

3. Underserved Respondent Summary #1 – [Internal only: Use this response if Windstream geographic area completely overlaps applicant area on the map.]
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.”

Submitter: Wichita Online Inc.

Comment: Wichita Online (WOI) currently provides a wide array of broadband offerings within the proposed funded service area. WOI has offered broadband services in excess of the 3 MB bandwidth requirement as set forth in the ARRA, NOFA and BIP/BTOP guidelines, all prior to the ARRA approval. WOI’s service area already provides for “sufficient access to broadband service to facilitate rural economic development”, as well as allows for choice of service providers through competing with Local
Exchange Carriers, and allows for leasing of services through our own facilities. The proposed funded service area already provides for not only broadband service through WOI, but several ILEC’s, Cable companies, and numerous mobile broadband service providers offer several choice to the subscriber. WOI’s opinion of the proposed funded service area is that of excess spending where funds could be better used in other portions of the country to deploy broadband service in accordance with the ARRA, NOFA and BIP/BTOP programs. Through funding the proposed service area, excessive competition will be created for all, which may create a short term economic boost, but have severe long term ramifications which may force service providers out of business.