

July 2, 2024

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20554

RE: *Ex Parte Presentation: Establishing the Digital Opportunity Data Collection, WC Docket No. 19-195; Reform of the FCC Form 477 Data Program, WC Docket 11-10*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On Monday, July 1, 2024 the undersigned and Brian O'Hara on behalf of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), spoke with Rashann Duvall, from the office of Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel regarding the circulated Order, Declaratory Ruling and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking updating the Broadband Data Collection ("BDC") process and mapping processes.

In the discussion, NRECA stressed that while the new national broadband maps are indeed an improvement from previous census block level maps, they are still do not possess the data level necessary to accurately guide where federal funds should be targeted. We conveyed our consistent position that the FCC's continued reliance on self-reported advertised speeds from provider marketing campaigns rather than focusing on the on-the-ground realities in the rural areas means many communities will continue to be deprived of adequate broadband service. NRECA asserted that this inadequate data also means many communities are incorrectly labeled as served and thus not eligible for future federal support programs like BEAD, ReConnect, or other future programs to improve connectivity in their areas.

Further, NRECA highlighted the fact that currently wireline broadband consumers have no vehicle to demonstrate that advertised speeds may not be reflective of the service they actually receive. In turn, the Commission should allow submission of individual speed tests by consumers to challenge claims of adequate high-speed wireline broadband. Alternatively, we discussed the prospect of objective third party testing of technological capability. Additionally, we stressed the importance of accuracy and verification in reporting quality of service.

Without these changes, NRECA contends that the BDC and National Broadband Map will remain a flawed reference for coverage, establishing an inaccurate and untenable foundation that will frustrate the key goal of ensuring our shared broadband objectives, particularly for those in rural America.

Thank you for your attention to this correspondence. Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, a copy of this letter is being filed via ECFS.

Sincerely,
/s/ Gregory J. Orlando
Gregory J. Orlando
Regulatory Affairs Director

cc: Rashann Duvall