



Chairman Scott Oelslager
Ohio State Finance Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Oelslager,

I am writing to you today in support of Senate Bill 225 to create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program. This legislation would provide financial support to vital broadband investment and infrastructure expansion in the vast areas of Ohio that remain unserved, particularly the 32-county Appalachian region of Ohio.

Many other states have successfully enacted similar legislation to increase investment of this vital infrastructure. I am concerned that Ohio will continue to fall behind if such legislation is not adopted very soon.

In my former life, I was an entrepreneur who owned and operated cable television and rural wireless broadband systems in the SE United States. In my new home in Athens County, 10 minutes from my office at Ohio University, I cannot get an acceptable broadband service. Broadband is an “essential service” and no economic development can occur with widespread, fair access to broadband signals. I now am the Director of OU’s Center for Entrepreneurship trying to support student, faculty and local entrepreneurs and get them to stay in SE Ohio. We must put more pressure on existing broadband companies to extend their plant and provide incentives for entrepreneurs like me to build more systems to serve rural Ohio.

I enthusiastically support the passage of SB225 so that all Ohio residents have the opportunity to thrive in today’s digital landscape.

Sincerely,
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