

November 8, 2020

Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee  
c/o Chairman Steve Wilson  
Via Electronic Submission

Dear Chairman Wilson:

I am writing in support of Ohio House Bill 13 – the rural broadband expansion bill. HB 13 addresses rural broadband challenges head-on by creating a competitive, taxpayer-friendly grant program and eliminating regulatory barriers that hinder expansion. It will assist broadband providers in constructing the expensive and high-risk last-mile infrastructure needed to get broadband to Ohioans who live and work in unserved areas of our state.

Getting reliable internet at my home has been an ongoing issue for me for nearly a decade. In 2011, I built a new home for my family about three miles outside of Findlay. When I bought the property I knew there was cable and internet available further down my road and I assumed I just needed to make a request to get the service extended to my house. Little did I know that it would be cost prohibitive to extend internet to my neighborhood. My family of five have struggled with our internet ever since moving into what should have been our dream home. Now that I know how difficult and expensive it is to get internet extended to our neighborhood, I'm not sure I would have made the same decision to build where I did. Although I don't have any immediate plans to sell my home, I am very concerned how my home's value will be impacted with no access to a hardline internet connection.

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, my family and my neighbors have needed to use the internet for even more access than ever before. While it was important before, the pandemic has really highlighted that reliable high speed internet is vital in today's society. High speed internet is no longer a luxury, it is a requirement. Our children's education, our social interactions, our entertainment, and our livelihoods are dependent on high speed internet.

Knowing that this bill passed the Ohio House with bipartisan support, I am hoping that the Ohio Senate will quickly pass HB 13 so rural homeowners like me might be able to get broadband extended to their residences. This bill is not only important, but it's necessary.

Thanks for your consideration.

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