Representative Richard White Kentucky General Assembly 702 Capital Avenue, Annex Room 432 Frankfort, KY 40601

Kentucky Public Service Commission 211 Sower Blvd Frankfort, KY 40601

RECEIVED JUL 2 2 2021 **PUBLIC SERVICE** COMMISSION

Dear Public Service Commissioners.

As a member of the House Standing Committee on Education and Joint Committee on Education, I write urging the Public Service Commission to do its part in expanding rural broadband to the currently unserved areas of Kentucky.

It has historically been difficult for students in more rural areas of the state to gain proper internet access due to the barriers in the way of infrastructure expansion, as more poles are needed to provide access to more people. To encourage broadband providers to invest in expansion, we must ensure the costs of pole replacement are divided more fairly and equitably between broadband providers and pole owners than they currently are. Similarly, allowing broadband providers the ability to take advantage of overlashing opportunities also allows for an increased rate of deployment.

Students of all ages have come to rely on fast internet connections to do their homework and schoolwork. We must ensure all Kentucky students have equal opportunity for academic success—and that starts with broadband access. We cannot leave our students without the tools and services they need to thrive in their education. Reliable, high-speed broadband is no longer a luxury, but a necessity. I implore the Commission to take action and help Kentucky's students as they work toward success.

Sincerely,

Puhard White 99 DISTRICT