

Commonwealth of Kentucky

702 CAPITAL AVENUE
CAPITOL ANNEX 242
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601



36TH SENATE DISTRICT
502-564-2450
MESSAGE LINE 800-372-7181
julie.adams@lrc.ky.gov

SENATOR JULIE RAQUE ADAMS
MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIR

July 26, 2021

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PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION

Kentucky Public Service Commission
211 Sower Boulevard
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Kentucky Public Service Commissioners,

While the pandemic brought upon our nation many hardships that accompany full-time remote work and remote learning, many of my constituents in the Louisville area have thankfully been able to fulfill their responsibilities given ample access to broadband internet. But others in our state are not as fortunate.

We can't forget the many Kentuckians – especially students in unserved, rural areas – that do not have access to high-speed internet. This problem existed prior to the pandemic, as Kentucky currently ranks 40th in the nation in broadband access, according to one study. We fail to serve our young learners if, as public servants, we do not take action to ensure greater access to this critical tool of learning and discovery. We can't afford to let them fall behind.

The General Assembly recognized this opportunity last session in two ways. First, it appropriated \$300 Million in federal funds to the broadband deployment fund. And second, House Bill 382 directed the Public Service Commission to implement pole attachment rules to help facilitate and expedite the efficient deployment of broadband service.

As the Commission finalizes its rulemaking, I urge you to take this unique opportunity to expand the proposed pole attachment policies to ensure that broadband providers and pole owners pay their respective fair share for costs to replace utility poles and address important issues like over-lashing fiber lines.

Effective policies targeted at these issues will hasten deployment of broadband to rural areas – a priority shared by Democrats and Republicans alike – and ensure families and businesses across our Commonwealth have greater access to opportunities, regardless of where they live.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Julie", written over a faint circular stamp.

Senator Julie Raque Adams
State Senator