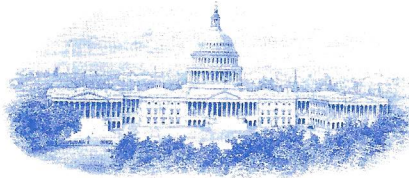


ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

4TH DISTRICT, ALABAMA

1203 LONGWORTH HOB
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-4876

WEB PAGE: www.house.gov/aderholt



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

RANKING MEMBER,
COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE

AGRICULTURE

DEFENSE

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC

February 5, 2021

Mr. Kenneth Boswell
Director
Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
P.O. Box 5690
Montgomery, AL 36103

Dear Mr. Boswell:

As the Member of Congress for Alabama's Fourth Congressional District, I am writing to show my support for Tombigbee Electric Cooperative's recent applications for funding to expand broadband service to Franklin County.

If awarded, the five grant applications totaling \$2,468,142 will allow Tombigbee Electric and Freedom Fiber to provide much needed broadband fiber access to large parts of Franklin County, to include the towns of Vina, Hodges and Spruce Pine and unincorporated areas in Southeast and Northeast Franklin County.

As you well know, broadband internet has become an essential part of today's information infrastructure, which is the backbone of our ever growing and changing 21st Century economy. Unfortunately, rural communities, such as those in Franklin County, are often left behind due to a lack of broadband which causes them to suffer the negative effects of the "Digital Divide". The lack of broadband internet can lead to a lack of healthcare, business, and education opportunities. If awarded, this grant will allow Tombigbee Electric and Freedom Fiber to work to ensure that Franklin County has access to reliable broadband internet service and provide the tools needed to foster a changing workforce, education system and healthcare industry.

I ask that you give their applications your most thoughtful and serious consideration. If you need additional information, please contact Paul Housel in my Jasper office at 205-221-2310, or feel free to contact Steve Foshee at 205-921-6712.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress

RA:ph