



To whom it may concern:

I would like to express the importance of broadband to Franklin County. As you well know, a high-speed internet connection is critical for various aspect of life including our educational systems and economic development. I understand this as I am an educator and also serve on the board of the Franklin County Development Authority. With the ongoing threat of COVID-19, lack of access to a high speed internet connection is detrimental to our children and our local citizens.

I am personally impacted by the lack of broadband internet in Franklin County. I am forced to use a wifi hotspot to access materials on the internet which makes doing any type of work from home very difficult. What is so sad about this situation is that my home is less than one-half mile from the city limits of Russellville on Highway 43. Charter (Spectrum) offers its service less than one-fourth mile from my home. I have spoken with Charter and AT&T on numerous occasions about extending their service to my home and the neighborhood across the street. I have basically been laughed at and told it will never happen. I am very concerned that Charter was the winning bidder to supply internet to the entire county. I am very doubtful that they will be willing to provide the answer that so many of us are desperately seeking. I hope I am wrong, but I feel they only wanted the bid to keep Tombigbee Communications out of the entire county.

I am sending this letter in full support of Tombigbee Communication's fiber initiative which includes providing true, high speed broadband to every home and business in our area. It is no secret the rural areas in America have been falling behind our larger city neighbors. This type of project in our county gives us hope to increase our economic development, help our schools, improve our medical facilities and enhance our quality of life. We need something like this to encourage people and businesses to remain in our town. We need this to help us recruit new jobs for our great people. Simply, we need more opportunities. With the promise of a true high-speed connection, the opportunities are limitless. In the world we are living in today, fiber is no longer simply an option: it is a necessity. In order to be successful and to survive, this is a service we simply must have.

I stand behind Tombigbee Communications as they work to enhance the lives of those in Northwest Alabama. I are looking forward to receiving this world class service soon. I am anxiously awaiting the exciting opportunities and development this will bring to our rural area.

Thank you,

Timmy J James, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean of Academic Programs