

November 15, 2024

VIA EMAIL

broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov

RE: Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (“BEAD”) Letter of Intent for East Kentucky Network, LLC d/b/a Appalachian Wireless

To Whom It May Concern:

East Kentucky Network, LLC, d/b/a Appalachian Wireless (“EKN”), submits this letter to express its intent to apply for BEAD funding in Virginia.

Since its inception in 1991, EKN has been a leader in technology and innovation in Appalachia. The company began by providing wireless service to eastern Kentucky during the early days of cellular technology. Today, EKN is a premier provider of enterprise solutions and data storage for Appalachia and beyond. Its existing fiber network supports data transmission speeds of up to 100 Gbps across a 400-mile redundant fiber ring. In total, the network extends over 7,500 combined fiber miles, ensuring high-speed connectivity while serving as the infrastructure for EKN’s data center, enterprise solutions, and wireless services. While EKN is based in Floyd County, Kentucky, its service area includes portions of Buchanan, Dickenson, and Wise counties in Virginia.

More recently, EKN has deployed a 16,700-square-foot state-of-the-art data center facility, offering secure and accessible storage for business systems and data. This facility features redundant power sources, environmental controls, and transport capabilities connecting to hub locations in Chicago and Ashburn, all supported by EKN’s extensive fiber network.

EKN is well-qualified to expand broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved areas, including community anchor institutions. The company boasts high-quality network monitoring solutions, emergency response capabilities, security protocols, and the financial and managerial expertise required to expand and enhance service successfully. EKN’s key management team has over 85 years of combined experience in the telecommunications and broadband industry. The senior management team includes Michael L. Johnson (Chief Executive Officer), C. Michael Huffman (Chief Operations Officer), Jamie Thacker (Director of Technical Operations), and Lynn Haney (Director of Financial Operations).

November 15, 2024

Page 2 of 2

EKN's network monitoring solution provides comprehensive visibility and management of its infrastructure. This system is designed to track uptime, network usage, bandwidth consumption, hardware health, and other performance metrics. It offers a centralized platform for monitoring various network devices, applications, services, and servers, allowing EKN to prevent and efficiently remediate any network issues.

Additionally, EKN has several emergency response measures in place. These measures ensure that: (i) an adequate backup power supply is available for sustained operations without external power; (ii) EKN can reroute both voice and broadband traffic around any damaged or non-functional facilities; and (iii) EKN can manage spikes in voice and broadband traffic caused by emergencies. Importantly, EKN maintains the ability to expand its network capacity to keep the maximum load at 65% or less, thus effectively handling large spikes in traffic during unusual events.

EKN's proven history of providing high-quality broadband services to rural communities makes it an outstanding candidate for participation in the BEAD program. We look forward to the opportunity to participate in this historic broadband deployment initiative. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Michael Huffman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

C. Michael Huffman
COO

Enclosure: Attachment 1 – List of Counties

November 15,
2024 Attachment 1

ATTACHMENT 1

List of Counties

Applicant is interested in applying for the BEAD program in the following counties:

Buchanan County
Dickenson County
Wise County