



Board Of Supervisors – Of – Gage County

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Dear Members of the Public Service Commission –

We are writing to you today to give our support for Nextlink's Capital Projects application for fiber in Cortland. Quality, high-speed internet has become essential to our constituent's daily lives; business, work, school, health, church, communication, television, news, agriculture, and so much more. Every day, there has become more and more of a reliance on internet which became extremely evident during COVID-19.

As stated in Nebraska's Capital Project Fund Application to Treasury, "Rural broadband availability and adoption are also critical to the economic vitality of rural Nebraska." High-speed broadband is a huge economic tool for our communities. It allows people to live in our county's villages while working across the world. Not only does it connect these community members to more job opportunities, it is also helping them utilize telehealth, children using remote learning, and farmers with precision agriculture. These are all important aspects of a families' life that will draw and/or keep them in our rural communities with more ubiquitous 100/100 or better internet service.

Another benefit of Nextlink applying in this community is that they are participants in the Affordable Conductivity Program. The need for internet access does not stop because a person has a lower income. Being able to utilize this program in these communities will help bridge the digital divide.

We have seen the inaccuracies of the maps where homes that should be listed as unserved were reported as underserved and homes that are reported as served that should be underserved. Over-reporting does not help bridge this digital divide and harms the ability for our communities to participate in these programs or get the service they need for economic vitality.

Please consider this application to help our rural community stay and grow with a reliable broadband service.

Thank you,

Erich Tiemann, Chairman
Gage County Board of Supervisors