



September 22, 2021

Nebraska Public Service Commission
Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program Grant
1200 N Street, Suite 300
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Nebraska Broadband Bridge Grant Committee:

I am a resident of rural Dawes County on Hough Road and I live in a very remote rural area of Nebraska. My home/ranch is in western Nebraska; I love where I live and want to continue to do so. I am in need of much better internet service.

The possibility of having fiber broadband is imperative for me to continue to live in the rural area. I am a lender and senior officer with Farmers State Bank, Alliance, Nebraska. Working from home, especially during the Pandemic was difficult for me, not because my company would not allow it but because I have unreliable service for my internet needs.

I live 40 miles from my bank location in Alliance, Nebraska. If there is inclement weather working from home is a huge asset, not only to me but to my employer. Rather than calling in because of a blizzard I can be at home and at work.

Please consider supporting Mobius Communications as they work to increase the broadband network in rural, remote areas. It makes western Nebraska a much more desirable place to live and prosper in business and life.

Sincerely,

Dustin Chester
Senior Vice President/Compliance Officer



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Chadron Community Hospital Corporation

dba **Western Community Health Resources**



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Chadron, NE 69337

(800) 717-1231 or (308) 432-8979

September 27, 2021

Nebraska Public Service Commission
1200 N St. #300
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: Mobius Communications Grant

Dear Nebraska Broadband Bridge Grant Committee,

I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to submit a letter of support for the availability of fiber broadband for rural residents. Living in a rural area is truly a blessing but does have limitations in accessing fast and reliable internet service.

Ranching is an important part of my life but I am also employed by Chadron Community Hospital as the Director of the public/community health programs of Western Community Health Resources. With the responsibilities as the manager of multiple state and federal programs it becomes essential that I have access to internet service for completion of my duties. The COVID pandemic has expanded the need for working from home and I do not see that trend changing. On average I attend some type of interaction/meeting that includes Zoom, Webex, Teams, etc two to four times daily and complete three fourths of my daily activities with internet assistance. This option/opportunity has proven to be cost effective and employer friendly which solidifies the need for future sustainable reliable internet.

The ranching business not only includes regular communication utilizing internet but camera systems that are essential for monitoring and care of livestock. When weather is an issue I want to have the assurance of access and this proposal would help do that.

I thank you in advance for considering and prioritizing this proposal for broadband services for rural and remote areas and supporting those who live, work and play here.

Sincerely,

Sandy Montague-Roes, RN

Western Community Health Resources Director

Dear Grant Committee:

We have lived in rural Dawes County for over 10 years; we love living in the country and would not trade our rural roots for anything.

Living in the rural area challenges us without having strong internet. We depend on our internet to connect us to all the things we need to research and purchase items for our Ranch and home.

We raise cattle and can market our livestock on-line through video auctions if necessary. Seeing what the cattle markets are and keeping up with prices are very important for our business. Also, we have 3 school aged children, and with the changing times we live in require a lot more at home computer work.

We have found having to do meetings on the computer is not possible and we cannot be face to face with people due to distance. The lack of support in our broadband has hindered much of what we have needed to work through, during these COVID times and beyond. We currently have a wireless product that leaves us scarcely able to communicate. Our wireless is not consistent. We lose it with the weather or trying to download or stream things. Please help Mobius with this grant funding to get the rural area a strong internet.

Thank You.

Heidi Smith

September 27, 2021

Nebraska Public Service Commission Nebraska Broadband Program Grant
1200 N Street, Suite 300
Lincoln, NE 68508



Dear Grant Committee:

I am writing to voice my argument for the need of fiber optics in the very rural areas of the Nebraska panhandle.

I am viewing this need from many different perspectives. The first is as a small business owner. Our family owns and operates a world class horseshoeing school on our property that attracts students from every continent. When they attend, they need access to a stable internet connection to complete homework assignments and to stay in touch with family members. Often because of distance, the internet is the only way they are able to contact their loved ones. We have different housing options available, but are currently unable to provide dedicated internet service to that building because it isn't used consistently and we don't want to pay for something regularly that is only being utilized off and on. I understand that with the fiber optic internet wiring, it is possible to "hold" the service to specific parts of our plan. Currently, students using our 2nd housing option piggyback off of the signal to our home, which is next door. This makes it difficult for any internet use in our home, particularly for our 5 children (one who is homeschooling at this time) to complete schoolwork and homework assignments as well as other classes and enrichment activities such as Driver's Ed, that is offered online due to distance in our area to attend classes. On weekends, when our family wants to relax and stream a movie together, we often end up frustrated when students using our connection (which is a priority for our business) interferes with that particular activity we'd like to do. In our main facility, students often compete with the office for internet usage during business hours, which slows learning and productivity. Having a fast, reliable connection, particularly when we have full classes, would be a huge benefit to our students and our business.

In addition, I am a K-12 Visual Art Educator in our local rural school district. During quarantine, being able to be online and teaching during the entire school day was often thwarted and was very difficult having my own 5 children trying to participate in their own virtual classes. We often had to pick and choose, and scheduling my job vs. my children's education was a headache as a result.

Why should rural areas be any different in need than urban areas? We choose to live in these areas and we choose the agriculture lifestyle to benefit others globally whether we are raising crops and livestock to feed the world or giving students access to skills that benefit those ag producers as well as citizens around the world who use animals as a legitimate form of therapy, athletics and entertainment

Please consider our need for faster, more reliable internet in the less populated, but no less important, areas of the Nebraska Panhandle.

Sincerely,

Millicent Butler

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Betson Ranch L.L.C
10 Barrel Butte Rd.
Whitney, Ne. 69367

Dear Grant Committee:

The Betson family has lived in Dawes County since 1888. Our son and his young family are the 5th agriculture generation. A lot has changed in the 133 years and we would not trade this for anything.

We raise cattle, wheat and operate a bed and breakfast. Keeping up to the moment with the weather, markets, on line reservations and ordering is crucial for our business.

Living in the rural area challenges us without having strong internet. We depend on our internet to connect us to all the things we need to research and purchase items for our Ranch. Our elementary and college age grand children rely on the internet to research and complete school projects.

To have meetings on the computer is not possible and we cannot be face to face with people so to distance ourselves. The lack of support in our broadband has hindered much of what we have needed to work through, during these COVID times and beyond.

We currently have a wireless product that leaves us scarcely able to communicate. Our current land phone line, cell phone and internet provider are not consistent and we lose it with the weather or trying to down load or stream things. Please help Mobius with this grant funding to get the rural area a strong internet and phone service.

Thank You
Mark and Myrna Betson

MOBIUS_BRIDGE GRANT DAWES COUNTY_M_7

Dear Grant committee,

My family and I have lived in rural Dawes County for many years. It is important to us that we have quality internet as both my husband's work and my work involve using the internet. I teach English to students in Korea and Japan. My husband does wood sales and uses the internet to advertise his products. Currently, we use our cell phones as hot spots. It's not the best set up, but it's our only option at this time. We enjoy living in the country and don't want to give up our rural lifestyle. Sometimes I have not been able to complete my English classes, because our internet has been so poor. If we could have dependable internet access, it would make our jobs so much easier. Please consider helping Mobius with this grant to supply rural residents with quality internet access.

Sincerely,
Nancy Goracke

Nebraska State Legislature

SENATOR STEVE ERDMAN

District 47
Bayard, Nebraska

Legislative Address:
State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4604
(402) 471-2616
serdman@leg.ne.gov



COMMITTEES

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September 24, 2021

Nebraska Public Service Commission
1200 N Street, Suite 300
P.O. Box 94927
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Re: Broadband Bridge Program

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to encourage you approve requests made by Mobius Communications for funding under the Governor's LB388 Broadband Bridge Program. Mobius is based in Hemingford, which is in my district. I write in support of Mobius because of the strong record the company and its affiliate, Hemingford Cooperative Telephone, have in providing reliable and affordable broadband services to rural residents throughout all of the areas the companies serve in the Panhandle.

I urge the Commission to take a careful look at the track records of those that apply for grants under the Broadband Bridge Program, which I voted to support. For too many years, the Commission allowed millions of dollars in NUSF support to be distributed to telephone companies that have very little fiber to show in their territories. You can make sure the funds under both the NUSF and Bridge program are well used by carefully examining the track records of the companies that seek them. Hemingford Cooperative Telephone and Mobius have demonstrated records of responsibly stewarding past government support. They are the type of business that Nebraskans can trust to get the job done, which is critical when public funds are being used.

My colleagues and I are watching the work you are doing. We wish you success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Erdman".

Steve Erdman

Nebraska State Legislature

SENATOR JOHN P. STINNER

District 48
State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4604
(402) 471-2802
jstinner@leg.ne.gov



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October 1, 2021

Nebraska Public Service Commission
1200 N Street, Suite 300
P.O. Box 94927
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to encourage you to approve requests made by Mobius Communications for funding under the Governor's LB388 Broadband Bridge Program. While Mobius primarily serves outside of my district, I am very familiar with it and its affiliate, Hemingford Cooperative Telephone. Both companies have exemplary records of providing reliable and affordable broadband services to rural residents in the Panhandle. Hemingford's deployment of fiber to all locations in its territory – even remote farms and ranches – shows its commitment to using ratepayer and taxpayer funds wisely.

It is critical that rural Nebraskans have access to the global marketplace, health care services, and other resources essential to the sustainability and growth of rural areas. I supported LB388 and am hopeful it will produce results for Nebraskans across the state, especially in rural areas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John P. Stinner".

Senator John P. Stinner
District 48