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[www.esu13.org](http://www.esu13.org)

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## Educational Service Unit 13

Dr. Laura Barrett, Administrator

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February 16, 2023

Chairman Dan Watermeier  
Nebraska Public Service Commission  
1200 N Street, Suite 300  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Chairman Watermeier,

As an important resource to public schools in the Nebraska panhandle, ESU 13 has a responsibility to ensure our students have access to the tools they need to learn and grow and providing access to fast, reliable broadband is one of the best ways we can do this.

It is critical that we not forget our rural children and families. Smaller communities often do not have access to the same internet services and speeds as larger cities and towns. With populations under 500, small towns and villages in western Nebraska are in danger of being left behind. Charter Communications is ready to bring better connectivity to these communities through the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program.

We have an opportunity to course-correct and make sure rural Nebraskans are offered the same quality and reliable broadband as their urban counterparts. By working with experienced an internet service provider like Charter, we can bring fast and affordable connectivity to every community.

Charter Communications, using the brand name Spectrum, is already provides broadband to residents in small towns in rural areas across Nebraska. Not only is Charter a proven partner in rural buildouts, but they're working to connect residents across income levels through Spectrum Internet Assist and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), doubling down on their commitment to providing quality service to all homes and businesses.

I encourage you to select Charter for these upcoming grant opportunities due to their experience and commitment to connecting Nebraskans.

I appreciate your time in considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Barrett".

Dr. Laura Barrett  
Administrator  
Educational Service Unit 13

*Achieving educational excellence for all learners through strong partnerships, service and leadership*

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of several overlapping, wavy bands of blue in various shades, creating a sense of movement and depth.



February 16, 2023

Nebraska Public Service Commission  
Chairman Dan Watermeier  
1200 N Street, Suite 300  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Chairman Dan Watermeier:

The Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce (“Chamber”) represents 60 years of Cheyenne County history, over 250 businesses and civic organizations and thousands of jobs. Our communities and businesses thrive because of the support of one another through our Chamber. Unfortunately, much of Gurley and Lodgepole still lack adequate access to broadband. In this day and age, small businesses, corner stores, even home-based businesses require a reliable, affordable high-speed broadband connection in order to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global marketplace.

Charter Communications currently serves the city of Sidney with high-speed broadband, and as such the businesses in these cities already have the opportunity to acquire to a robust high-speed broadband connection. The businesses outside the city limits are not so lucky. For this reason, I was pleased to learn that Charter Communications has applied for a Broadband Acceleration Grant to help offset the build cost to reach these underserved areas of Cheyenne County. The Chamber of Commerce lends its full support for their application because the unserved areas of Cheyenne County are in need of reliable, high-speed broadband.

If you have any questions that I can answer I would be happy to speak with you. Please feel free to contact me by phone at 308-254-5851 or by email at [director@cheyennecountychamber.com](mailto:director@cheyennecountychamber.com).

Sincerely,

Toshia Jones  
President/CEO  
Cheyenne County Chamber of Commerce