

Nebraska State Legislature

SENATOR BRIAN HARDIN

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COMMITTEES

Vice Chairperson – Health and Human
Services
General Affairs
Nebraska Retirement Systems
Urban Affairs

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

February 15, 2023

Dear Chairman Watermeier,

The Village of Henry, nestled right alongside the Nebraska-Wyoming border and the North Platte River, is a small but resilient town made up of many hardworking people and I'm proud to represent them in the state legislature. To set Henry and Scottsbluff County up for success, we need to be better connected to those around us.

Unfortunately, some Henry residents still lack access to high-speed broadband. While progress on that front has been made in recent years, I still have constituents come to me expressing their frustration with slow speeds, high costs, and unreliability. With the Nebraska Broadband Bridge/Capital Projects Fund-Round 1 grant program up and running, I believe we have a tremendous opportunity to do right by the people of Henry and get them the fast, reliable internet they deserve.

One applicant for a project in Henry is Charter Communications, also known as Spectrum. They have my full support based on their commitment to offering affordable internet plans – including through the Affordable Connectivity Program – and their fast speeds. They currently serve 167,000+ customers in Nebraska, with each one of them having access to gigabit speed plans, if they want, and minimum

speeds of 300 Mbps. This is in part thanks to Charter's excellent fiber infrastructure, which would be a gamechanger for Henry residents.

All in all, Charter demonstrates a commitment to helping close the digital divide. They've already invested substantially in their Nebraska footprint, and I believe they'd be an excellent partner to the Nebraska Public Service Commission and our community. I strongly encourage you to approve their application to receive funds through the Bridge Program so that all of my constituents can soon have fast, affordable, and reliable internet access.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Hardin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sen. Brian Hardin
District 48
Nebraska Legislature



MORRILL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 21, 2023

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

Mr. Watermeier:

A longtime Nebraskan, I am extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to work with our state's next generation of leaders at Morrill Public Schools. Our students work hard and love to learn and grow with their friends and teachers. We have a duty to ensure they can continue to thrive and learn by providing them with the proper tools to do so, such as fast and reliable internet.

To make improved connection a reality, I encourage you to work with a provider with extensive experience in executing rural buildouts and offering exceptional customer service. In my opinion, Charter Communication more than fits that bill, as they can bring faster and more reliable speeds communities here in Nebraska. They also offer multiple programs for low-income residents to access broadband at more affordable costs.

Broadband connectivity is a key piece of the puzzle when it comes to promoting equal opportunities across Nebraska, including for our students in Henry. Through the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program, I thank you for working to help close the digital divide between rural and urban Nebraskans, leading to increased collaboration and economic growth across the region.

I implore you to choose Charter as your partner for this critical endeavor.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Barry Schaeffer
Superintendent
Morrill Public Schools