

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Nebraska Public)	
Service Commission, on its own Motion)	Docket NUSF-117
to consider implementing a program to)	
incentivize new fiber construction for)	January 17, 2020
E-rate eligible entities.)	

REPLY COMMENTS FROM THE STATE OFFICE OF THE CIO

- 1. Does the Commission have authority to implement a program to supplement the federal E-Rate Special Construction matching fund program. Specifically, the Commission seeks comment on whether Neb. Rev. Stat. 86-323 provides the Commission with the authority to create this program for libraries and schools. Why or why not? Please explain.**

Yes, I feel the Neb. Rev. Stat. 86-323 should provide the Commission with the authority to create this program for libraries and schools. I have done our library's Erate for the past 8 years. I think our community is lucky to have a local internet service provider that has fiber available to our library and community. Our speed is currently at 60M with the goal of increasing to at least 100M by the end of next year. We recently received notice that our grant for a Smart TV was approved so having a faster speed is important as our library grows. We also want to encourage use of our free WiFi and add stations to plug patrons' own devices in. With all these devices we will need a fast, clear speed to maintain the quality of internet service in our library. Another program we would like to offer at our library with the new Smart TV is virtual tours. With this, we also need a fast speed. We are looking at so many ways to keep up with the technology and internet needs of our small community so that our library is used in every way that it can be. We also face the problem that we want to grow but our budget in a small community needs to stay the same. We are not the only library who struggles with this.

- 2. If so, how should the Commission determine a carrier's eligibility for the program? Should the Commission create a mechanism to designate eligible telecommunications carriers specifically for this purpose?**

By need. I think if the library or school doesn't currently have accessibility to fiber they should qualify.

- 3. If implemented, what should the filing requirements be for the program? What criteria should the Commission consider relevant? Should the program operate similar to the Commission's Telehealth program where the Commission provides an overall budget for the program? Should the Commission provide reimbursement to the eligible carriers at a specific level for each site? How should funding for each site be determined? Should the Commission utilize a grant process?**

If it's not broke, don't fix it. I think Erate runs well but needs updates on providing help in small communities that do not have an IT staff. So anything new should include help as well so that the program is actually used.

- 4. If implemented, what should the timeline be? What dates does the Commission need to factor in for library participation in the federal E-Rate program?**

Like E-rate I would think. I have a lot of timelines and due dates so if it goes along with Erate, then it should have similar dates.

5. What other factors should the Commission take into consideration?

Again, support. Any form of help a library or school in a small community is important in the success of a program.

Respectfully submitted,

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