



July 11, 2023

RE: Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program, Round 3, Nextlink (Adams) Application

To Whom it May Concern:

The Southeast Nebraska Development District (SEND D) is pleased to extend its support to Nextlink's Nebraska Broadband Bridge Program, Round 3 application to deploy fiber optic broadband in rural areas of Gage County surrounding Adams.

Nextlink's Adams application aligns with SEND D's continued commitment to ensuring the District's member communities and counties are involved in the broadband expansion process. The Gage County Board of Supervisors and the Village of Adams have continued to assess their connectivity needs and have identified the area listed in this application as requiring additional investment to expand broadband access. Through the company's continued engagement with the County, Nextlink has designed this project to be receptive to the connectivity needs of residents and businesses in rural Adams. Moreover, their partnership with the County ensures Nextlink will be extraordinarily well-positioned to deploy fiber in a cost- and time-effective manner upon award of this grant. The company's participation in and promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program also ensures the constructed network will be accessible to residents of all income levels.

Rural Adams, like much of SEND D's membership area, lacks access to wireline broadband infrastructure that delivers the speed and reliability residents need to work from home, learn online, receive quality telehealthcare, and apply advanced precision agriculture technologies. User-generated speed tests submitted through the SEND D & NROC Nebraska Broadband Speed Test initiative indicate experienced speeds in the project area are far below both 25/3 and 100/20 standards of service. Analysis of the most current FCC BDC coverage filings paints a striking picture of how this area has "fallen through the cracks" of other funding programs and remains unserved by wireline broadband infrastructure. SEND D strongly supports this project and urges the Public Service Commission to approve this application.

Sincerely,

Tom Bliss

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Bliss", is positioned above the title "Executive Director".

Executive Director

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