

Representative
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Michael Blair
Southwest Regional Planning Commission
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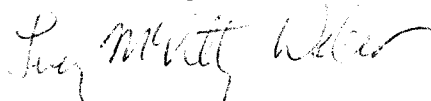
Dear Mr. Blair:

I am writing in support of the University of New Hampshire/Fast Roads grant application for broadband funding.

I represent seven northern Cheshire County towns, which range in population from Roxbury at 237 as of the 2000 census, to Walpole at 3594. The topography is hilly, and much of the population is dispersed along secondary or dirt roads. Although mapping is not yet complete, I can state anecdotally that many of my constituents are underserved when it comes to communications options, and have no access to high-speed internet of any sort. These constituents receive their phone service from Fairpoint Communications. We have many areas in which Fairpoint has not made high-speed internet available, and we have been unable to determine when it might become available. These same areas are ones which the cable companies avoid, because of the cost of running cable to low density population areas. Large areas have no cell phone coverage. Some houses are situated so as to make satellite reception problematical. These households are left with dial-up service as their only option for internet access. Because of the distance between their houses and distribution centers, and the increasing complexity of most web design. These families are effectively denied internet access.

The lack of high-speed internet service is one that my constituents express concern about regularly. They need access for their children's education, for their businesses, and for health and safety reasons. I hope the grant application will be favorably received. Representative Tara Sad joins me in this request.

With best regards,



Lucy McVitty Weber