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MEMORANDUM

TO: South Carolina Internet Service Providers

FROM: Jim Stritzinger
Director, Office of Broadband Coordinator (“Broadband Office”)

DATE: July 18, 2023 (Revised Aug. 1, 2023 per FCC guidance changes)

RE: Fall 2023 Data Request

To maintain efficient deployment of federal funding and prevent duplication of facilities, the SC Broadband Office (SCBBO) requests that all residential wireline and/or fixed wireless Internet Service Providers (ISPs) submit their most recent information by **September 15, 2023**, so the next set of SC broadband maps can be developed. This is the final data request for 2023 and broadband maps using this information will be published in December 2023.

ISPs that deliver satellite, middle-mile, or exclusively commercial service are not required to submit data.

This request is made pursuant to Section 10 of Act 142 that provides as follows:

The SC Office of Broadband Coordinator (a.k.a. SC Broadband Office or SCBBO) is required to contact the appropriate entities to provide information necessary to compile the statewide county-by-county mapping plan that shows the location and broadband facility capabilities. Proviso 73.7 of 2021 further clarifies that to facilitate the provision of information necessary to this task, all information provided by a broadband service provider or other entity providing information for the purpose of creating a South Carolina broadband map shall be maintained by the Office of Broadband Coordinator and any other agency as confidential, proprietary, and a trade secret as defined in Section 30-4-40 of the 1976 Code, and subject to exemption from disclosure under state and federal law. The information shall not be subject to disclosure under Chapter 4, Title 30 of the 1976 Code, except in the form of a map where information that could be used to determine provider-specific information about the network of the broadband service provider or other providing entity is not disclosed. Except as otherwise provided in this provision, such broadband provider-specific information shall not be released to any person other than to the broadband service provider or other entity providing information, employees of the Office of Broadband Coordinator, agents designated to assist in developing the South Carolina broadband map, entities contracting with the Office of Broadband Coordinator, and other state agencies administering funds for broadband deployment without express permission of the submitting broadband service provider or other entity providing information. Such information shall be used solely for the purposes stated under this provision. The Office of Broadband Coordinator shall ensure that any such agents, entities, or agencies with whom the information

is shared are aware of the confidential nature and restricted purposes for which the information may be used and that any such agents or entities that are not state agencies execute an appropriate nondisclosure agreement protecting the information from public disclosure before receiving the information. Entities providing broadband service or middle-mile infrastructure in South Carolina shall, on an annual basis, provide to the Office of Broadband Coordinator deployment data in a format specified by the office to provide the most accurate and granular representation of currently available broadband infrastructure. These same entities, when they serve residential or business customers, shall also provide the type of technology deployed together with the sustainable download and upload speeds available at each serviceable location. Entities failing to provide such data on an annual basis may be disqualified from state funding opportunities for the current fiscal year. Annually, the office shall compile this information, analyze, and update statewide broadband deployment information.

This data request requires the use of **Census 2020** geography. **Improperly coded data will not be accepted.** Pursuant to Section 10 of Act 142 of 2020, timely, accurate data submission is required to participate in fiscal year funding opportunities and/or challenge processes.

The following data elements are now required:

1) FCC Broadband Data Collection (Jun. 30, 2023) – Submit your most recent Broadband Data Collection (BDC) information in the same format as you submit to the FCC. Per FCC [instructions](#), each BDC filing must include information about the filer and:

Broadband Availability Data

- *Fixed wireline broadband service providers must submit **both**, a **polygon shapefile** that constitutes the service area of the provider **and** the **list of locations served** as calculated by the FCC’s BDC portal after the polygon shapefile is imported. See [BDC Availability Data Specifications](#) Sections 6 and 7 for more info.*

NOTE: *Even though the FCC BDC provides the option for a list of BSL locations to be reported as served by an ISP, the SCBBO recommends that all ISPs report to the FCC using carefully rendered shapefiles at this time. This is because we have observed that the BSL Fabric is being modified substantially in early iterations – including many new locations, lat/long modifications, and street address corrections. By carefully rendering and reporting shapefiles (with unserved donut holes removed), ISPs will likely be insulated from underlying fabric changes. This is particularly important because, any unserved BSL Location ID that you may mistakenly miss in your FCC BDC filing, will consequently show as unserved and likely be made available for investment in future competitive grant rounds.*

All South Carolina ISPs that have received funding from the SCBBO or participated in the Funded Projects Register (FPR) **are required to verify** that all project locations which are construction complete are included in their June 30, 2023, BDC filing.

The SCBBO assumes that all of the following project-specific locations **are now complete** per agreed upon construction schedules **and must be included** in June 30 BDC filings:

- CARES Act
- Rural Broadband Grant Program (RBGP)

- Last Mile Grant Program (LMGP)
- Funded Project Register (2021, completed by Oct. 31, 2022)
- Funded Project Register (2022, completed by Jun. 30, 2023)

Since most ARPA SLFRF Notices to Proceed were issued in 2023, the SCBBO understands that only a subset of these locations will be complete and reported in June 30, 2023 BDC filings. However, each ISP should carefully review their list of ARPA SLFRF funded locations and make sure that June 30 BDC filings are as accurate as possible.

To assist with this effort, the SCBBO has developed an ISP-specific, comprehensive list of all ORS-funded and FPR locations. We will be setting up separate meetings with each ISP to discuss this list, and at the conclusion of the meeting we will provide the detail via Citrix ShareFile.

- *Fixed wireless broadband service providers* must submit either a list of locations (preferred by SCBBO) or propagation maps and propagation model details that constitute the service area of the provider. See [BDC Availability Data Specifications](#) Sections 6 and 7 for more info.

Broadband Subscription Data

- *Facilities-based fixed broadband service providers* must report connections to end-user premises -- by census tract, technology code, advertised downstream speed, and advertised upstream speed -- that the service provider (including affiliates) equips to enable an end user to receive information from and/or send information to the internet at information transfer rates exceeding 200 kbps in at least one direction.

The FCC Form 477 file format continues to be used for reporting broadband subscription data. The SCBBO only accepts subscription data in properly formatted Comma Separated Value (CSV) files. Web forms will not be accepted.

See [BDC Availability Data Specifications](#) Section 5 for more info.

Subscription Audit: The SCBBO will be auditing FCC Form 477 Subscription Data against BDC Broadband Deployment Data. This is needed to create the most accurate residential Access maps. As a result, commercial-only deployments will not reflect on residential maps.

Our subscription audits are performed by verifying that there are **a minimum of 10 residential customers, receiving service levels that meet or exceed 25/3** in each **Census Tract**. All Census Blocks within the Census Tract will be marked as unserved when audit conditions are not met. Challenges to this audit **will not be accepted**.

FCC Confirmation Documents

- In addition, ISPs must provide copies of BDC timestamped submission confirmations (PDF) from the FCC to the SCBBO.

2) ISP Contact Form – Please update or create a detailed ISP contact form using the attached template. This will help the SCBBO maintain contact with appropriate personnel and communicate with your team on a variety of issues.

3) FCC BDC Amendments – If, for any reason, an ISP files amendments to their June 30, 2023, information with the FCC, the ISP is required to share these modifications with the SCBBO at the same time.

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4) ISP Customer Telemetry – As you are probably aware, the SCBBO is immersed in planning for BEAD funding, which is part of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) that was signed into law in Nov. 2021. Nationally, IIJA is investing \$42.5 Billion for broadband-related purposes and on June 26, 2023, a portion of this money - \$551,535,983 - was allocated to South Carolina.

As we look ahead to 2024, BEAD requires that we develop and execute a Challenge Process whereby crowd-sourced speed test information may be used to challenge advertised service levels in specific geographies.

To this end, if your company has the capability to remotely capture an individual customer's service levels from your network operations center (NOC), we ask you to share the exact provisioned:

- Lat/Long
- Service Address (not billing address)
- FCC LocationID (optional, if known)
- Technology Type (50 – Fiber or 40 – Cable)
- Download Speed (Mbps)
- Upload Speed (Mbps)
- Latency

... in the form of an Excel file (CSV) for **only** your **fiber and high-speed cable customers**.

Our goal is that by sharing customer telemetry with the SCBBO, we will be able to optimize investment and fight against overbuilding your strongest network geographies.

Submit items 1 through 4 to your **assigned Citrix Sharefile location**:

Sep 1, 2023 Data Request\[ISP Name]\FCC June 30 BDC

as soon as possible but no later than **September 1, 2023**. The SCBBO would be grateful if all respondents would submit the ISP contact form as soon as possible.

If you have not previously reported to the SCBBO, please send an email to broadband@ors.sc.gov to request that a secure folder be created.

PLEASE BE AWARE: The SCBBO collaborates closely with the FCC with the goal of building the most accurate Broadband Service Location (BSL) Fabric for the State of South Carolina. We will require amended filings and **may inform the FCC if we identify material errors in reported data**. ISPs that do not accurately account for all funded and FPR-committed locations (as described above in Broadband Availability Section above) will be required to amend their filings with the FCC. If, for any reason, the SCBBO requires an amended filing with the FCC, grant processing will be paused until revised confirmation pages and location information from the FCC are received and verified.

FOR INFORMATION: For our ISPs that plan to participate in the upcoming FCC Fabric Challenge, on July 3, 2023, through public notice [DA 23-579](#), the Broadband Data Task Force shared that “challenges submitted in advance of **September 8, 2023**, are most likely to be reviewed and adjudicated in time to be accounted for in the next iteration of the Fabric (December 2023).”

All data that was acquired in the Spring of 2023 has been analyzed and aggregated and is now featured on www.scdigitaldrive.org. This data will serve as the foundation for future grant eligibility maps.

We are grateful for the efforts of all parties that submitted data. The website now features a comprehensive set of broadband maps for all 46 counties and interactive tools that were made possible by your data in combination with nearly 12 million Ookla® Speedtest® records.

Please email broadband@ors.sc.gov if there are any questions or need further clarification.

Thank you, in advance, for your support and cooperation.