



March 28, 2019

Dear Senator Hoffman,

In response to legislative inquiries for SB74, GCI has reviewed its fiber, microwave, and satellite networks to determine whether we can provide 25 Mbps connectivity to K-12 schools currently serviced by GCI. GCI has invested more than \$3 billion since its founding to extend modern communication services throughout our state. These continuing investments enable our broadband delivery to anchor-tenants in Alaska, ensuring that we have the capabilities to achieve the 25 Mbps goal.

We deeply appreciate **your** efforts to improve educational opportunities throughout Alaska, and we at GCI share in your priority to advance education.

We look forward to working with you, other policymakers, educators, school board members, and parents to ensure Alaska's children have access to the technology that enables the best educational opportunity possible.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pam Lloyd".

Pam Lloyd, PhD
Vice-President, Corporate Strategy,
GCI Government, Healthcare and Education

Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2019 11:21 AM
To: Maridon Boario
Subject: In Support of HB75/SB74

Hello,

I wanted to write in and express my support for these bills. As the technology director for two rural school districts, I know firsthand how important broadband access is to education. We are fortunate to have BAG funding to allow us a 10Mbps connection, but as more and more instructional resources move online it's becoming more difficult to utilize the current bandwidth to support teaching and learning.

Because of the limited number of teachers in our small schools students are taking more online courses. These courses often require students to watch videos, and these require a good deal of bandwidth to work well.

Lake & Pen School District utilizes distance delivery of some special education services, such as speech therapy. We also have a distance tutoring program where students are able to get individualized, live instruction to help them progress. It's becoming increasingly difficult for this to work well given increasing network congestion.

Ten of our twelve sites also use online learning to support mathematics and language arts instruction. Teachers in one village may be presenting lessons to students in three or four other villages across the district. It works, but it would work better with more bandwidth.

If our schools had access to a 25Mbps connection we would be better able to provide quality instruction. We wouldn't see the problems we have now with limited availability to online curricular resources. We'd be better able to conduct our online classes, and would be able to support distance meetings for administrators and teachers, which in turn saves transportation dollars. Going "beyond the basics" we'd be able to branch out into opportunities we can't take advantage of now such as virtual field trips to the Seward Sea Life Center, or educational institutions around the country or world (NASA, the Smithsonian, etc.).

I realize these are dire financial times and don't envy the decisions my legislators must make on behalf of all Alaskans. Healthcare, public safety, infrastructure and education are all very important. I just hope decision-makers also understand how important broadband access is for schools, especially in the rural parts of the state where access to resources is much more limited.

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Jim Dube
Technology Director
Lake & Peninsula School District
Also supporting Bristol Bay Borough School District
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