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**From:** Mike Husa <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 15, 2022 10:23 AM  
**To:** Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Kelly Merrick; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Rep. Adam Wool; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Sara Rasmussen; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Bart LeBon; Rep. Ben Carpenter; Rep. DeLena Johnson  
**Subject:** HB 363

Representatives,

I am writing to you in support of HB363. Rural areas need dependable high speed Internet at affordable rates, but we also need sufficient data capacity to be able to actually use the Internet. GCI serves much of our region for Internet access, the costs for basic plans are high and have limited data caps, while they will tell you that you have unlimited access at reduced speeds it is so slow that even the [gci.com](http://gci.com) page will take minutes to load in Bethel. While I applaud you for taking on this bill and urge you to pass it, please expand it to also include sufficient data caps to make it usable. During Covid-19 closures we lost many of our GED students who did not have the ability to access an online program that we use to assist them in increasing their skills to be able to pass the GED exams. Our region's schools were closed to any outside activity even if they reopened for their K-12 population to return. While the GED now has a remote testing option both the speed and data limits will not allow our students based in the villages to test remotely unless they are at one of the schools in rural Alaska.

I also serve as a LKSD School Board member and while our schools were in remote learning mode much of it was done by hand delivering materials to student's homes, as the Internet was not available to them. GCI worked with LKSD to build an Intranet to try and address this issue but it largely was not a success.

Dependable high speed Internet, with sufficient data capacity will do a great deal to increase learning opportunities as well as employment opportunities for residents of Rural Alaska.

Thank you for your time.

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Mike Husa  
ABE Instructor  
Yuut Elitnaurviat

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TESTIMONY: SHAWN WILLIAMS ON APRIL 15, 2022, 1:30 PM AK  
ALASKA HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING ON HB 363

Good afternoon Co-chair Merrick, and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Shawn Williams and I'm the Vice President of Government Affairs and Strategy at Pacific Dataport.

We are the locally-owned satellite middle mile provider – located in Anchorage – launching two satellites over 100% of Alaska and connecting more than 110,000 rural Alaskans with broadband. Our first of two satellites goes up in August and the second goes up in 2024. We've done this entirely with private funds to the tune of about \$50M, and without one dollar of subsidy funding.

I want to point out that the Alaska Telecom Association, who clearly has played a major role in promoting this legislation, does not represent our company, Tribes, Tribal consortiums, middle mile providers or satellite providers. That said, I would like to take this time to share our recommendations that I believe would help make this bill stronger for rural Alaskans.

One – REMOVE the term "in-state". It's protectionist and only serves to limit the competition (tribes, tribal consortiums) who may deploy a network in Alaska. I'll concur with Mayor Springer that this term or phrase does not appear anywhere in IJJA.

Two – ADD the composition of the broadband office IN THE BILL and give it a mission. The NTIA has already stated the broadband office MUST provide a plan to serve every single resident to qualify for any funds.

Three – ADD language that recognizes IJJA funding regulations and ensures this bill will not conflict with IJJA language that's still developing in DC.

And Four – ADD legislative oversight of all awards. A summary could be submitted to the Alaska Legislature on December 31, then reviewed and approved during the following legislative session.

Finally, I'd like to suggest an entirely separate option ... A CS of this bill could be MUCH simpler. Strictly address broadband office composition, mission, and function. Everything else – like technical details, definitions, and the parity fund – could be scratched.

Pacific Dataport appreciates that this bill prioritizes the unserved and works to organize Alaska's broadband funding. We encourage the spirit of competition and anything that promotes broadband expansion, efficiency, lower prices, better service, competition, and a free market.

I would like to thank this committee and our bill sponsor for addressing such a major challenge for Alaska. I look forward to helping where I can. Thank you for your time.

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