

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 DEPARTMENT of RESOURCES and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE of the COMMISSIONER
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GEORGE M. BALD
 Commissioner

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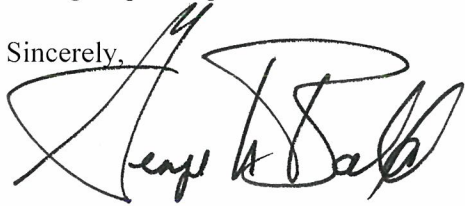
Debra A Howland
 Executive Director and Secretary
 New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
 21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 10
 Concord NH, 03301-2429

Re : DT12-246 Electric and Telephone Utilities – Review of Utility Pole Access Issues

Dear Secretary Howland:

The mission of the Department of Resources and Economic Development (“DRED”), through its Division of Economic Development, is, among other things, to expand economic opportunities in New Hampshire through the attraction of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses. Broadband is critical to economic development efforts in New Hampshire. In furtherance of its mission, DRED has been at the forefront of supporting broadband expansion and initiatives since 2000 through the Governor’s Telecommunications Planning and Development Advisory Committee (TAB). The TAB is made up of a mix of state agencies, legislators, business and residential users, and private sector providers. A report commissioned by the TAB and authored by the consulting firm Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker resulted in DRED/TAB ownership of the Broadband Action Plan of 2008 (BAP).¹ The action plan identified 25 action items that New Hampshire recognized as challenges and a deterrent to increased broadband deployment state-wide.

The Director of Broadband Technologies and DRED have a vested interest in the outcome of this docket. As work continues with public/private partners and resources are sought to promote and contribute to the state’s broadband technology planning and development initiatives, it is crucial we resolve issues regarding access to the poles and adopt policies that are conducive to promoting broadband expansion in NH . We believe this issue is important to the economic health of the state. DRED is interested in the outcome of this document and welcomes the chance to provide it’s perspective to the Commission regarding the issues that will affect broadband deployment and affordability for the future through a public process that will facilitate the involvement of all interested parties.

Sincerely,

 George M Bald, Commissioner

¹ The Broadband Action Plan of 2008 is available at <http://www.nheconomy.com/uploads/Final-Report-082808.pdf>