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RYAN STEWART, ED.L.D.  
SECRETARY DESIGNATE OF EDUCATION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM  
GOVERNOR

Before the  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of )  
Modernizing the E-rate ) WC Docket No. 13-184  
Program for Schools and Libraries )

**Comments in Support of SECA's Petition for Reconsideration  
Regarding Shared NIF Equipment Cost Allocation Requirement**  
**Report and Order Released on December 3, 2019; FCC Order 19-117**

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The New Mexico Public Education Department supports schools, including charter schools and tribal schools, with E-Rate support. This support includes assisting schools with the application process, assisting other state agencies and educational entities with E-Rate applications, waivers, and appeals. We also work with USAC on eligibility issues for BIE controlled schools and Pre-K eligibility. Our agency sees digital equity, with support from the E-Rate program, as part of the overall equity strategy for schools in our state.

Because of the rules in place, districts in our state have been able to consolidate data center resources, lower costs for wide area networks, and realize operational savings that can be put back in the classroom. As it was pointed out in the change of the amortization rule adopted by the Commission on January 22, 2020, Albuquerque Public Schools has realized a decrease in annual broadband costs from \$4.46 million per year to \$458,000 per year. Gallup McKinley County Schools in Gallup, NM has been funded to upgrade rural locations from digital microwave to fiber while reducing recurring costs from \$672,000 per year to \$97,000 annually. Several of our districts have facilities

These savings would be lost if the FCC requires schools in a district to share the cost of equipment in a data center that provides critical support for instruction. Other districts have facilities that serve niche needs in districts. Farmington Municipal Schools has a facility that includes the data center, career and technical education for students who come to the facility for one or more classes before returning to the high school in which they are enrolled.

Albuquerque Public Schools has their Career Enrichment Center that offers technical education for students from all high schools in the district. These facilities, without a full-time student count, provide critical instruction and support for students. Restricting Category Two funding for these types of instructional facilities would negate the cost savings that has been realized under the Second E-Rate Modernization order issued in December, 2014.

New Mexico Public Education Department supports the Petition for Reconsideration filed by the State E-Rate Coordinators Association (SECA) for the reasons outline above. The schools in our state have realized significant cost savings since the Modernization Order, savings that could vanish with the full-time student language in the order released on December 3, 2019 (FCC 19-117).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Chadwick", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Dr. John Chadwick  
State E-Rate Coordinator  
February 4, 2020