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January 7, 2025

Dear Members of the BEAD Review Committee,

On behalf of the Effingham County Board of Commissioners, I am pleased to express our enthusiastic support for Planters Communications in their Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program application. The Board of Commissioners has had the privilege of collaborating with Planters on broadband initiatives and has witnessed their unwavering commitment to bridging the digital divide in our community.

Effingham County currently has 2,823 underserved and unserved locations. These areas, including households, businesses, and educational institutions, suffer significantly from the lack of reliable broadband access. Expanding broadband to these regions will provide vital opportunities for economic growth, educational advancement, and improved quality of life. Planters' efforts in addressing these challenges are critical to ensuring equitable broadband access for all residents.

Planters has been a trusted partner to Effingham County for many years, particularly in the Clyo area, where their commitment to enhancing connectivity has been evident. This longstanding relationship has fostered mutual trust and effective collaboration, making them a reliable entity to spearhead this initiative.

To further demonstrate our commitment to this cause, Effingham County is happy to contribute up to \$100,000 to support Planters in their efforts to achieve broadband equity. This financial assistance underscores our dedication to ensuring this essential infrastructure is available to all parts of our county.

With the funding provided through the BEAD program, Planters will be able to expand their transformative work, reaching even more underserved and unserved areas. Their innovative approach, proven expertise, and strong ties to community partners make them uniquely qualified to implement broadband solutions that will drive economic growth and enhance connectivity across Effingham County.

The Effingham County Board of Commissioners fully supports Planters in their application for BEAD funding, and we look forward to continuing this important partnership to achieve our shared goals. Please do not hesitate to reach out if additional information or assistance is required.

Sincerely,

Damon Rahn
Chairman At Large

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