



Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives

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July 23, 2010

Mr. Steven C. Reed
Secretary
Missouri Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Re: Case No. TW-2010-0362
*In the Matter of a Repository File in which to Gather Information and Assess the
Availability of Broadband Services in the State of Missouri*

Dear Mr. Reed:

The Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives ("AMEC") is the state association of Missouri's forty seven (47) member-owned, nonprofit electric cooperatives that collectively provide electric service to more than seven hundred thousand (700,000) consumers, primarily in the rural portions of the state. AMEC appreciates the opportunity to take part in the Commission's inquiry into broadband service availability in Missouri.

Missouri electric cooperatives' interest in expanding broadband service throughout Missouri is twofold.

First, broadband currently is not available in large parts of the state served by electric cooperatives--and our member-owners want it. According to a fall 2009 study conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture, rural broadband use nationally is only 41%. Rural broadband use in Missouri is estimated to be actually much lower. For example, one of our cooperatives, Co-Mo Electric, recently commissioned a survey that found that only 18% of its membership had wire-line broadband in their home. While 53% did have some form of internet service, 64% of that is provided via dial-up. When polled, 93% of households with a computer were interested in receiving the type of internet access that broadband can provide. With respect to broadband availability, Co-Mo's broadband availability study showed that overall 74.8% were completely unserved and 8.3% were underserved.

Second, electric cooperatives require broadband availability within their service territories in order to implement "smart grid" technologies that not only allow their

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members to better understand and control their electric usage, but also provide numerous other benefits such as energy conservation and better management of, and planning for, the operation of the cooperatives' systems. Rural electric cooperatives nationally are leading the way in new smart grid applications and demand-side management programs. In Missouri, the electric cooperatives' "Take Control and Save" program was first instituted many years ago, and as the Commission will recall, several of our Missouri cooperatives attended and made presentations at the Commission's "Smart Grid Summit" recently held in Jefferson City.

Our member-owners control what we do, and what direction we take, on this as on all issues. Broadband service availability has become a high priority for Missouri's rural electric cooperatives and AMEC looks forward to participating in this Commission proceeding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Stewart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "B".

Brent Stewart
Legislative and Regulatory Counsel
Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives

CBS/bt