



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Public Programs...Personal Service
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January 7, 2025

Arizona Commerce Authority
Sandip Bhowmich, State Broadband Director
Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program
100 North 7th Street, Suite 400
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Subject: Letter of Support for Resound Networks' BEAD Grant Application

On behalf of Cochise County, Arizona, I am writing to express support for Resound Networks' application to the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. Resound Networks' proposed project aligns with our commitment to closing the digital divide in Cochise County.

Cochise County faces unique challenges that make broadband deployment critical but complex. Our county encompasses over 6,200 square miles of predominantly rural and rugged terrain, including expansive desert areas and mountainous regions. This geography presents significant barriers to traditional broadband infrastructure deployment, leaving many of our communities underserved or entirely unconnected. Many residents lack access to broadband speeds meeting the FCC's minimum standards, creating a substantial gap in digital equity.

Lack of adequate broadband connectivity affects us in multiple ways:

1. **Economic Development:** Local businesses, including our vital agricultural and tourism sectors, struggle to compete without reliable internet. This limits economic growth and job creation in our region.
2. **Education:** Students in Cochise County face a significant disadvantage as remote learning and online educational resources become increasingly integral to modern education. Connectivity is vital to support virtual classrooms and homework assignments.
3. **Healthcare Access:** Telemedicine, which has proven to be a lifeline in rural areas, is not a viable option for many residents due to inadequate internet infrastructure. This forces patients to travel long distances for basic and specialized healthcare services.
4. **Public Safety and Communication:** Reliable broadband is essential for emergency services and communication, particularly in remote areas,

Resound Networks has a track record of deploying innovative, scalable, and cost-effective broadband solutions in rural communities. Their proposed project promises to deliver high-speed internet to unserved and underserved areas of Cochise County.

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Broadband connectivity will have a transformative impact on our community, improving quality of life, advancing educational outcomes, and bolstering economic resilience. Cochise County stands ready to collaborate with Resound Networks to support their implementation and success.

Thank you for considering this application.

Sincerely,

Chair
Cochise County Board of Supervisors