



Summit County Public Health

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Senate President Matt Huffman
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, 2nd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

June 17, 2021

Honorable Mr. President,

This letter is sent in opposition to the State Budget Bill amendment that bans **municipal-owned broadband internet**. The budget amendment that prohibits municipalities from offering broadband service outside of its municipal boundaries and to not use local tax revenues to fund construction is **extremely detrimental to local communities**. Furthermore, this is happening as the **American Rescue Plan** is pouring billions of dollars into state and local government coffers to invest in broadband infrastructure.

Fiber optic broadband internet is necessary for public safety and emergency services on many levels. We know this firsthand. Since 2019, Summit County Public Health (SCPH) has utilized a municipal broadband service resulting in savings to taxpayer, faster internet speeds and the ability to respond to an emergency. This has been an extremely reliable network.

1. SCPH would not have been able to respond to the technological needs we currently experienced during the pandemic. We had to conduct many drive thru testing and vaccinations clinics requiring robust internet speed at an affordable cost.
2. There are many of our residents that are technologically left behind without an affordable option for internet connectivity. This was clearly a problem during the COVID-19 pandemic as individuals tried to find testing sites and vaccines.
3. SCPH still contracts with a private provider for redundancy which is 100 megabits at cost of \$600.00. Our municipal broadband for 1000 megabits is \$660.00. We pay almost the same amount for 10 times the speed!!!

If the Senate budget amendment is signed into law, it would put Ohio on the list of states that outright ban or erect barriers to municipal broadband networks. This is bad for our residents, businesses and defeats any opportunity to put Ohio back on the road to recovery. Please do not support this amendment. All of Ohio deserves to have affordable access and high speed broadband services.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roberta De Pompei".

Summit County Public Health Board of Health
Dr. Roberta De Pompei, President