



Michael Preston
Secretary of Commerce,
Executive Director
Arkansas Economic
Development Commission

January 21, 2022

Senator Terry Rice & Representative Jeff Wardlaw, Co-Chairs
Arkansas Legislative Council
#1 Capitol Mall, 5th Floor
Little Rock, AR 72201

Re: Request for Appropriation - Premier Holdings LLC -Stamps Project [\$3,188,730.30]

Dear Chairman Rice & Chairman Wardlaw:

As you know, on Friday, November 19, 2021, the Department of Commerce was seeking an appropriation for the ARC broadband grant program in the amount of \$124,766,141.48. This appropriation was intended to fund 32 broadband projects specified in an attachment to the appropriation request. However, during this time, the Broadband Office received challenges to three of the listed projects totaling \$11,024,391.88. As a result, two E. Ritter Communication ("Ritter") projects and one Premier Holdings LLC ("Premier") project were withheld for further review.

Since then, we have completed our review of the challenged projects resulting in Ritter withdrawing both of their disputed projects. The Premier – Stamps project has been approved by our office with a 20% reduction in the requested grant amount. This means instead of requesting an appropriation for \$3,985,912.88, we are officially requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$3,188,730.30 for the Premier project. Premier will self-fund the remaining 20%.

Thank you for your leadership and assistance in extending broadband to Arkansans. Please call us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Preston".

Michael Preston
Secretary of Commerce
Executive Director, Arkansas Economic Development Commission