United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 19, 2021

Mr. Tim Thomas
Federal Co-Chair
Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mr. Thomas,

I write to bring your attention to the competitive application submitted by the Buckeye Hills Regional Council to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) 2021 grant program.

I understand that the Buckeye Hills Regional Council, in association with the Ohio Department of Education, Broadband Ohio, InnovateOhio, Ohio Department of Higher Education, and OARnet, seeks funding for their Southeast Ohio Broadband Loop Project. This project would establish public-private partnerships with carriers to expand access to broadband services for businesses, education, and residential use for 10 small communities in southeast Ohio. Specifically, the Southeast Ohio Broadband Loop Project would deploy 28 miles of open middle mile fiber optic and wireless infrastructure.

Assistance from your agency would allow the Buckeye Hills Regional Council to further their work in providing better internet connectivity to improve the quality of life for the residents in Southeast Ohio.

Please give all due consideration to this request. If there are any questions, please contact my Grants Coordinator, Kristy Ramey, at (614) 469-6774. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rob Portman
United States Senator