



Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative Member,

We write to you today to share some exciting news regarding a proposal between your telephone and electric cooperatives that will impact your access to world class internet service!

The deployment of true high-speed broadband has been virtually non-existent in rural, southern Virginia and northern North Carolina and the lack of that service restricts our region in a number of areas, primarily in educational achievement and economic development. In response to those limitations and requests from members, both Buggs Island Telephone (BIT) and Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative (MEC) set out to provide the best in communications technology by offering fiber-to-the-home to our members.

Community leaders addressed our region's early infrastructure needs in 1938 by creating your electric service provider, Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative (MEC). In 1951, to address another quality of life deficiency, MEC established Buggs Island Telephone Cooperative (BIT), to provide phone service to those same rural residents. Now years later, another intolerable rural-urban divide has left our area disadvantaged and without critically important high-speed broadband internet service. The infrastructure required to deliver that service is costly, and for large investor-owned providers, rural Southside Virginia lacks the density required to justify the expense of providing service (as was the case in the 1930's with electricity, and in the 1950's with early telephone service).

As you know, BIT has begun the buildout of fiber-to-the-home for broadband and phone service. MEC is doing the same through its subsidiary, EMPOWER Broadband. Working separately on the same mission, for the same members, has raised the frequently asked question, "Why aren't MEC and BIT working together on this project?".

We have heard those inquiries loud and clear. Accordingly, we are pleased to announce that we have signed an agreement that paves the way for EMPOWER Broadband to acquire BIT. By combining our resources, we will bring you high-speed broadband and phone service...faster. This proposed merger, however, is contingent on a vote by you, BIT's members. Soon, we'll provide all the information you need to support this proposal, and how and when you can cast your vote.

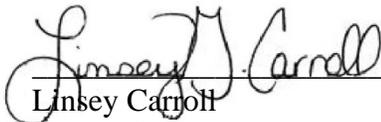
As we have both done for decades, we will continue to work hard to meet our commitments to you. Now, we are asking you to allow us to work together to maximize our efficiencies,

minimize any duplication of service and combine the collective strengths of our organizations to better serve you. While there remains much work to do, we wanted to share this exciting news with you now. We'll keep you well-informed as the process moves forward, and as we prepare for the vote by the BIT membership.

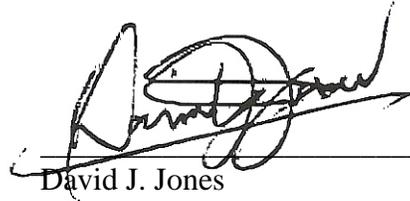
We are proud to represent our respective memberships in these matters, and this collaboration has been guided by our responsibility and desire to provide our members the same first-class technology urban areas enjoy. Our joint efforts have been, and continue to be, focused on the ultimate goal of improving your quality of life.

And we are confident we can do that much better together!

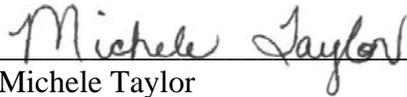
Proud to Serve You,



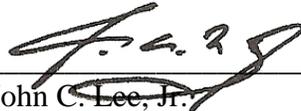
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Board Chair
BIT



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MEC/EMPOWER



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