

RESOLUTION OF THE ASHTABULA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN SUPPORT OF BROADBAND EXPANSION THROUGHOUT OHIO AND COLLABORATION WITH WINDSTREAM COMMUNICATIONS TO DELIVER RELIABLE, HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICES

WHEREAS, broadband, or reliable high-speed internet, is no longer a luxury but a necessity for participation in modern society, providing affordable and efficient access to essential services such as education, healthcare, public safety, and economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, expanding broadband access throughout the State of Ohio is critical to fostering economic growth, supporting job creation, improving educational outcomes, enhancing access to healthcare, and ensuring equitable opportunity for rural and underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, high-speed internet infrastructure empowers small and home-based businesses to compete in global markets, improves productivity, attracts private investment, and contributes to higher property values and community development; and

WHEREAS, broadband enables access to virtual and distance learning, bridges educational divides, and ensures that students and teachers—regardless of geography or income—can benefit from online resources and technology-enhanced instruction; and

WHEREAS, access to telehealth and digital health services depends on reliable broadband connections, providing critical care to patients in remote areas, improving chronic disease management, and strengthening public health systems; and

WHEREAS, broadband also increases civic participation, enables access to government services, supports environmental sustainability, enhances emergency response, and improves the overall quality of life for residents; and

WHEREAS, bridging the digital divide is essential to advancing equity, particularly for marginalized communities, people with disabilities, seniors, and those living in areas historically excluded from digital infrastructure investment; and

WHEREAS, counties that invest in future-ready broadband infrastructure position themselves to leverage state and federal funding, stimulate long-term economic development, and meet the evolving needs of residents and businesses in the 21st-century economy; and

WHEREAS, the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), provides \$42.45 billion to support broadband expansion in unserved and underserved communities across the United States; and

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio was allocated \$793 million in BEAD funding in June 2023 to expand broadband infrastructure and services through strategic programs, including the Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion Grant (ORBEG); and

WHEREAS, the Ohio BEAD Challenge Process ensures funding is targeted to areas most in need by allowing stakeholders to verify and improve broadband availability data, strengthening accountability and transparency in statewide broadband deployment efforts; and

WHEREAS, Windstream Communications, a high-speed internet service provider, has demonstrated a commitment to partnering with communities across Ohio to provide scalable, dependable broadband solutions that meet the demands of both residential and commercial users; and

WHEREAS, Windstream Communications service offerings—including fiber-based solutions, flexible internet plans, and community-centered network expansion—position the company as a valuable partner in supporting county's efforts to ensure all residents have access to reliable, high-quality broadband;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ashtabula Board of County Commissioners affirms its commitment to broadband expansion as a foundational investment in Ohio's future and encourages continued and expanded collaboration with trusted broadband providers such as Windstream Communications;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board supports public-private partnerships and strategic investments that promote equitable broadband access, economic opportunity, digital inclusion, and community resilience across all counties in Ohio;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Ashtabula Board will actively pursue opportunities to work with providers like Windstream Communications and other stakeholders to close the digital divide and bring reliable, affordable broadband to all residents and businesses;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Windstream Communications and other relevant partners to encourage statewide collaboration and action.

**ASHTABULA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CERTIFICATION PAGE**

Resolution No. 2025-272

June 10, 2025

RESOLUTION OF THE ASHTABULA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS IN SUPPORT OF BROADBAND EXPANSION THROUGHOUT OHIO AND COLLABORATION WITH WINDSTREAM COMMUNICATIONS TO DELIVER RELIABLE, HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICES

Upon the motion of Kathryn L. Whittington, seconded by Casey R. Kozlowski.

VOTE:

J.P. Ducro IV

Aye

Casey R. Kozlowski

Aye

Kathryn L. Whittington

Aye

CERTIFICATE OF CLERK

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of a resolution acted upon and duly passed by the Board of County Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio, on the date noted above.



Crystal Sturgill, Clerk of the Board
Board of County Commissioners, *Acting*
Ashtabula County, Ohio