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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
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TIM RYAN
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
13TH DISTRICT, OHIO

April 29, 2020

Tim Thomas, ARC Federal Co-Chair
Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20009-1068

Dear Chairman Thomas:

I am writing to you today to express my support for Eastgate Regional Council of Governments' application for funding in the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) 2020 Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative. Eastgate intends to apply for \$1,400,000 in POWER 2020 funding for the implementation of conduit for broadband within the project limits of the Youngstown SMART² Network project. The SMART² Network is a collection of projects aimed to revitalize Youngstown with a major focus on spurring economic development in the Downtown Youngstown opportunity zone.

Funding is the first step towards executing a fiber-optic broadband network throughout the central business district and along the Mahoning River. Broadband is an essential investment in critical infrastructure that will increase connectivity and strengthen economic competitiveness. POWER 2020 would provide a connection to major institutions including Youngstown State University, Mercy Health - St. Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital, Youngstown Business Incubator, and countless other economic drivers. This increased access to broadband will provide economic opportunities for new and existing businesses in the projects downtown central business district located in an opportunity zone.

Again, I offer my support for Eastgate Regional Council of Governments' application. This investment will help to revitalize the local economy which was negatively impacted due to the downturn in the coal industry resulting in significant job loss for the Mahoning Valley. We must ensure that disadvantaged communities have adequate basic infrastructure to implement community and economic objectives to help strengthen Appalachia's economy. Should you have any questions, please contact Rick Leonard from my Warren District Office at 330-373-0074 or via email at Rick.Leonard@mail.house.gov. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim Ryan".

Member of Congress

TR:pw

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