



September 1, 2020

Dear Legislators, Mayors, County Judges and ISPs:

The purpose of this letter is to inform everyone that the Supplemental Emergency ARC Rules have passed. This means all companies, including electric cooperatives and their subsidiaries, capable of deploying broadband to rural Arkansas are now eligible to apply for an ARC grant. This rule also gives flexibility to the 500 population threshold and the 500 retail customers. Many communities cannot reach these numbers due to their sparse population. This supplemental rule removes those barriers.

The window to submit an ARC grant will remain open so long as we have money to issue grants. We have \$100 million in grant funds to cover as much of rural Arkansas as possible by December 30, 2020. With that expressed, we want to see your completed application and encourage everyone to continue submitting applications despite the December 30, 2020, deadline. We do not know if Congress will extend the December 30th deadline. In the event they do extend that deadline, we will have your application reviewed and, if approved, ready for funding. The same would occur if we receive additional state funding.

Finally, and as stated in previous letters, make sure that any application submitted to ARC includes equipment prices. And any project that is smaller or greater than the community boundaries must include a KMZ or shapefile map of your project footprint. We know the time is reduced but we still can do a lot with the time remaining. Please visit our website and apply for an ARC grant at <https://broadband.arkansas.gov>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Steven Porch", written over a blue oval-shaped scribble.

Steven Porch
Chief Legal Counsel and
Executive Broadband Manager for ARC Broadband Program
Arkansas Department of Commerce