



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nex-Tech Announces Step Forward in Rural Broadband Network Advancement Act

Lenora, Kan, 6.5.19 —On May 22, 2019, Congressmen Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) and Collin Peterson (D-MN) introduced HR 2929 the *Rural Broadband Network Advancement (RBNA) Act*, which would invest in expanding and maintaining broadband access in rural areas. The act was orchestrated by Nex-Tech and five independent telecoms.

“Internet access is important to every person in America, whether living in a large city, or living on a rural farm, producing food for the nation. All consumers deserve the bandwidth necessary to deliver educational opportunities, telemedicine care, work from home opportunities and we need more markets that can support business growth and development,” **said Jimmy Todd, CEO/General Manager of Nex-Tech**, a rural telecommunications cooperative in Kansas.

The six independent telecoms that joined to write the RBNA Act, EATEL, SilverStar, Nex-Tech, Smithville, Totah and Chickasaw, recognized that the current USF funding support is capped while Internet usage continues to increase and the funding reform has failed to recognize the increasing data usage. Edge providers, specifically over the top video providers, are the biggest impact on network usage today. These providers utilize rural broadband networks without paying any transit fee and the ever-increasing capacity leads to network investments and upgrades by the rural broadband providers. “It is essential to address how the level of rural broadband infrastructure investments can continue to support the ever-increasing data growth. Companies, like Netflix and Amazon Video, use the networks of these rural telecoms daily for free, profit from their usage, yet pay none of the necessary infrastructure upgrades or upkeep costs of these networks,” **explained Rhonda Goddard, Chief Financial Officer of Nex-Tech.**

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The RBNA Act establishes a new program at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that would collect Network User Fees from edge providers such as Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Video, based on the data transported over the last mile of networks. User fees would then be invested by the rural broadband providers to help build, maintain and operate robust broadband networks in high cost rural areas. All rural broadband providers would be eligible for the program if they provide broadband access in high cost rural areas to fewer than 100,000 customers within a state and provide the speeds required by the FCC.

Nex-Tech connects thousands of people and businesses through a robust broadband network and cutting-edge technology. Nex-Tech's powerful fiber-to-the-premise technology delivers the highest quality Internet, with speeds up to 1 Gig, streaming TV, home security, and local and long distance phone service. Nex-Tech also provides an array of enterprise solutions including cloud services, Hosted PBX, network security, managed IT, physical security and surveillance, advertising solutions, and network operations monitoring to business clients nationwide.

Nex-Tech focuses on providing the best technology and support with the best people. With stores in more than 20 locations, a full-service Help Desk and 24-hour Network Operations Center, Nex-Tech customers are ensured unsurpassed technology and support. Headquartered in Lenora, Kansas, Nex-Tech has been delivering exceptional service since 1951.