Response to Written Question Submitted by Honorable Jerry Moran to Mike Oblizalo

Question. As the Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee with jurisdiction over the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), I have interest in seeing how NTIA could build upon the data collection of the FCC in its Form 477 process. More specifically, we have appropriated substantial resources in recent years to NTIA to broaden and update the National Broadband Map using their developed state partnerships. While NTIA has already announced its partnership with eight states to contribute data and other inputs into the map, would you agree that adding more state partnerships to contribute to the map would likely improve the overall accuracy of the map?

Response. . While I do believe that more data could help to improve the overall accuracy of the National Broadband Map, and data from all 50 states would be needed for the map to truly be considered a "National" map, ultimately we will need more granular data and verification of submitted data in order to have more accurate maps. This is especially true given federal agencies' reliance on the map when making funding or financing decisions. An inaccurate map can mean all the difference between a location receiving or not receiving broadband service. Therefore, whether it's through new state partnerships to complement NTIA's existing state partnerships, or through efforts by the FCC and USDA to improve their maps, we must strive for both more granularity and a robust challenge process of the collected data. As I stated in my testimony before the Committee, "A more granular map can certainly help identify more accurately where broadband is available, but a meaningful and robust challenge process will remain critical to validate both fixed and mobile date prior to any map being used by the FCC or RUS (or any other governmental agency) to make final decisions on funding or financing. … Only a meaningful validation process, including the ability to challenge data on the baseline map as inaccurate, will provide for the granularity and reliability that is necessary to ensure these maps contribute to the ultimate goal of connecting every American and keeping every American connected."