



Home of the Loggers

Potlatch School District #285
SMALL TOWN, BIG HEARTS, BRIGHT FUTURES



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Janet L. Avery, Superintendent

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Idaho Broadband Advisory Board
c/o Ramón S. Hobdey-Sánchez, J.D.
State Broadband Program Manager
Idaho Department of Commerce
700 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho 83702

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

Re: Latah County Dark Fiber Network
Capital Projects Fund Application
Challenge Rebuttal

Dear Idaho Broadband Advisory Board:

We are writing on behalf of the Potlatch School District to address our concerns and express our stance on Ziplly Fiber's challenge to request for services to the City of Potlatch, funded by the Idaho Capital Projects Fund.

Ziplly Fiber has responded to our request for proposals more than a few times over the past several years. We based our decisions on the criteria established by the USAC funding rubric, and were not able to accept their bids. Lower marks on the rubric were directly related to the poor service quality experienced in the past, untimely response and project completion, and high costs associated with their offerings. It is our responsibility to ensure that our resources are utilized effectively and efficiently, and unfortunately, the track record of Ziplly Fiber did not align with our objectives. We also made the decision to transition away from Ziplly Fiber for telecom services due to consistent negative experiences. This move was driven by a commitment to provide our students, staff, and patrons with the best possible options and services. We owe it to our community to make well-informed choices that reflect our dedication to being effective stewards of public resources.

Our decision to advocate for other choices in our town is not solely based on our experiences. The trust and confidence of our patrons in the services provided by Ziplly Fiber have been eroded over time. We firmly believe in fostering a competitive and diverse market that offers our students and community members the opportunity to choose the services that best suit their needs.

Potlatch School District has other funding opportunities and solutions for our services, but it is very important to us that our students have what they need to succeed at home. This commitment to our students' education is of utmost importance to us, and any challenge to this grant request raises concerns about our student's broadband needs being met at home.

Our stance against Ziplly Fiber's challenge is based on a combination of past experiences, concerns related to service quality, project completion, and cost, as well as the need to provide our community with a variety of reliable choices. We remain committed to making informed decisions that benefit our students, staff, and patrons, and we believe that supporting market diversity and quality in our internet service providers is essential for the well-being and progress of our community.

We would like to emphasize that our intention is not to undermine the contributions of Zply Corporation or any other provider. Rather, we seek to establish a well-rounded and resilient ecosystem that supports healthy competition, innovation, and fair pricing for our residents. By constructing an additional connectivity path and preparing a sustainable broadband solution, we are taking proactive measures to safeguard the future of our community's essential services.

Please do not remove the citizens of Potlatch - our students - from the Capital Projects fund grant application.

Thank you,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature on the left is 'Janet L. Avery' and the second signature on the right is 'Hiedi Carpenter'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janet L. Avery and Hiedi Carpenter

Superintendent and Technology Director

Potlatch School District #285

Member of the [Latah County Broadband Coalition](#): City of Potlatch, City of Bovill, City of Genesee, City of Kendrick, City of Juliaetta, City of Deary, City of Troy, City of Moscow, Latah County Library District, Moscow School District, Kendrick Joint School District, Genesee Joint School District, Potlatch School District, Troy School District, University of Idaho, Gritman Medical Center, Latah County, Highway Districts