



601 E. Third Street, Little Rock, AR 72201
www.acxiom.com

February 24, 2014

Dear Legislator:

I write again to you as the Chair of FASTER Arkansas (Fast Access for Students, Teachers and Economic Results) a group of governmental, business, education and digital industry leaders that Governor Beebe asked me to bring together last summer to work towards finding solutions on how to get affordable and vastly improved internet broadband capabilities into our public schools all across Arkansas. Over the last several months we have had several meetings, have heard from experts from around Arkansas and the country and have talked with many members of the Legislature.

It has come to my attention that we have an opportunity to put our schools in the position of obtaining the benefit of approximately \$40 million in funding from the federal eRate program....but we must act quickly, so I urge you to support SB 146.

Governor Beebe has directly sought your support of this use of \$10 million of general improvement funds and I too am directly asking for your support.

This is not about AREON, it is not about the middle mile of connectivity and service. Local schools districts will control the use of these funds and will allow better connections to classrooms, administration buildings and bus barns through 2015. What this will do is increase capacity and improve access in localities that need it the most. These funds are under local control and will not negatively impact local contracts. Moving forward on this will enhance our educational achievement prospects and help increase the economic competitiveness of Arkansans.

This is a very wise investment for our State, financially it is a \$4 for \$1 deal, how could it not be good? Granted it is not all that needs to be done but it will dramatically jump start where we need to go and we should grab this opportunity.

I would very much appreciate your consideration and support for SB 146.

Let's strengthen public education in our state by making these funds available....FASTER.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerry C. Jones".

Jerry C. Jones
Chair, FASTER Arkansas
Executive Vice President, Acxiom

cc Governor Mike Beebe