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Positive Impact of Yancey County Broadband on Business Development Highlighted at NC Rural Day in Raleigh

Wake County, N.C. – On May 29, Yancey County Economic Development Director Jamie McMahan and Country Cablevision Project Manager Dean Russell joined Governor Roy Cooper, NC Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger, NC House Speaker Tim Moore, and other legislators for NC Rural Day. Held at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh the event, hosted by the NC Rural Center, drew more than 450 rural advocates from 83 North Carolina counties to discuss three issues critical to North Carolina’s rural communities: broadband, healthcare, and small business development. Those in attendance heard from top experts and state elected officials about possible solutions and visions for moving forward in these three focus areas.

Yancey County Economic Director Jamie McMahan was selected as the featured speaker to highlight the positive impacts Country Cablevision’s broadband deployment project has had on business development. “There is no sector of the economy in Yancey County that has not benefitted from the availability of high-speed internet access” McMahan told those in attendance in the auditorium. “The availability of high speed internet is a necessary tool for our larger manufacturers who depend on rapid communication to succeed in our modern manufacturing environment, but the benefits don’t stop there. Wider broadband availability has spurred many of our small scale companies to add jobs and grow into larger facilities. It has enabled our Main Street merchants to supplement their in-store offerings with e-commerce options, and has even grown an entirely new sector of entrepreneurs that didn’t exist before the evolution of the internet. For instance, the number of AirBnB accommodations in Yancey County has grown exponentially, drawing many more visitors to our area and almost doubling our occupancy tax revenue.”

McMahan encouraged those in attendance to promote and pursue public-private partnerships in their communities to tackle the complex issues surrounding rural broadband availability. “The advancements made in connectivity in Yancey County would not have been possible without a service provider like Country Cablevision taking the financial risk to make the initial investment necessary to build this system. Furthermore, it would not have been possible without financial incentives from the government to encourage private investment. Studies tell us that in less than a decade more than half of the American workforce will work from home. With the quality

of life that rural communities offer, if broadband connectivity is available, communities like Yancey County will be poised to take full advantage of those folks who can live and work anywhere they choose and want to be in an area where quality of life and natural beauty is in abundance.”

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