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Public Service Commission: Encourages Wisconsinites to check and challenge FCC broadband map

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MADISON, Wis, – The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC or Commission) is encouraging individuals to identify inaccuracies and challenge the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) draft of the national broadband map by January 13, 2023. Since unveiling the pre-production draft of the new broadband in November, the FCC has called on consumers, state, local and Tribal government entities, and other stakeholders can help verify the accuracy of the data.

The new map is the most granular and up-to-date federal map of where broadband is and is not available across the country. The FCC's new broadband maps will be used to determine the allocation of Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) funds that Wisconsin will receive to build broadband infrastructure.

The new map is available at https://broadbandmap.gov/. Residents can type their address and check the map. If the information is inaccurate, residents can submit a challenge by filling out the Availability Challenge Form. Instructions are available at How to Submit an Availability Challenge on the FCC website.

"An accurate map that shows broadband access in our state is critical to ensure Wisconsin receives our fair share of federal funding," said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq. "Local leaders and members of the public know their communities best, which is why we are earnestly calling on them to get involved in the broadband mapping challenge process. It's time to badger the FCC and secure this funding."

On December 12, Governor Tony Evers and PSC Chairperson Valcq announced the

state will receive more than $5 million to begin planning for the deployment and adoption of affordable, equitable, and reliable high-speed internet in Wisconsin through the BEAD and Digital Equity Act, under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Wisconsin could expect an allocation of $700 million to $1.1 billion for broadband expansion under BEAD, depending on the FCC's mapping data.

The PSC's Wisconsin Broadband Office (WBO) submitted challenges to over 7,000 locations in the state, meaning the WBO identified homes and business that are missing from the map completely. But now, public participation in the availability challenge is essential. Wisconsinites' input will improve the accuracy of the map and result in federal funding for broadband being targeted to the areas of Wisconsin that need it most.

The FCC recently published a National Broadband Map Outreach Toolkit with materials that are available for public use. The PSC's Wisconsin Broadband Office is available to answer questions and share resources to assist individual in challenging the FCC map PSCStatebroadbandoffice@wisconsin.gov.