

From: [Bret Childers](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: RE: Case No. 19-1475-EL-RDR
Date: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 12:28:56 PM
Attachments: [96349E2596384D2781FAE9EB20829614.png](#)
[1548_001.pdf](#)

Dear Sir/Madam

Please add this letter of support of AEP Ohio Phase 3 filing.

Thank you,

Bret W. Childers
Chief Operating Officer



SOCS
219 W. Emmitt Ave. Waverly, OH 45690
[740.947.2409 ext 230](tel:740.947.2409)

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Southern Ohio Communication Services, Inc
219 W. Emmitt Ave.
Waverly, OH 45690

November 9, 2020

Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
PUCO Docketing
180 E. Broad Street, 10th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Case No. 19-1475-EL-RDR

Dear Sir/Madam:

In conjunction with AEP Ohio's ("AEP Ohio" or "the Company") proposed gridSMART Phase 3 implementation pending before the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) in Case No. 19-1475-EL-RDR, the Company has proposed installation of fiber optic cable to select Access Points rather than installing the traditional wireless communication to facilitate communication between AEP Ohio's smart grid components. The Company is proposing to install more fiber capacity than is needed for its own purposes in order to make dark fiber available to facilitate broadband services to unserved rural areas in and around the Company's service territory.

Installation of fiber connections will benefit Internet Service Providers ("ISP") since there is currently a lack of middle mile infrastructure in most of the underserved areas, which makes the economics of expanding to serve these customers with high-speed internet service challenging. Southern Ohio Communication Services, Inc. (SOCS) has a history of providing high-speed internet to areas that are generally unserved and underserved the biggest hurdle has been the access to a backbone that would connect the last mile connections to the rest of the internet. AEP Ohio proposal to provide dark fiber in areas where middle mile fiber distribution has not been available will allow backbone budget to convert into last mile budget providing services to more underserved and unserved homes.

Additionally, AEP Ohio's current installed fiber base would enable more efficient connectivity to high-speed internet access into locations such as Columbus. Connectivity to large data centers will allow for development of more diverse aggregation points and smaller data centers to evolve into more locations in Ohio. Having diversity in aggregation and routing points will increase reliability and security of the internet as an asset to all Ohioans.

AEP Ohio believes that deployment of middle mile fiber optic cable would benefit AEP Ohio's customers by providing access to gridSMART technology, ISPs by providing entry into new markets and unserved or underserved broadband users by providing access where it is currently unavailable. SOCS believes AEP Ohio's initiative is a solution that will enhance the rapid deployment of high-speed internet to ALL residences and businesses in Ohio allowing for better education opportunities, real time real world commerce, and unparalleled health and safety for ALL Ohioans.

Thank you for your consideration of the AEP Ohio gridSMART Phase 3 proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bret W. Childers", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Bret W. Childers, COO
Southern Ohio Communication Services, Inc.

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Case No(s). 19-1475-EL-RDR

Summary: Public Comment of Bret W. Childers, Chief Operating Officer, SOCS, via website, electronically filed by PUCO Docketing on behalf of Docketing