

QUAD STATE INTERNET LLC

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Open Letter Regarding the Planned KentuckyWired Disconnection of Accelecom

Kentucky Communications Network Authority (KCNA);
Governor Andy Beshear;
State Senator Danny Carroll;
State Representative Steven Rudy

April 24, 2025

Governor Beshear, KCNA, Senator Carroll, and Representative Rudy, and interested parties:

My name is Preston Louis Ursini; I am the Chief Executive Officer for Quad State Internet LLC, a locally owned and operated internet service provider headquartered in Paducah, Kentucky. Quad State Internet is dedicated to expanding robust fiber-optic broadband access and fostering advanced digital infrastructure throughout Western Kentucky and Southern Illinois. We proudly operate the Paducah Internet Exchange (PIE), Kentucky's premier Internet Exchange Point, which significantly enhances connectivity throughout the state and region. Our mission remains focused on bridging the digital divide, empowering communities, and driving economic growth through innovative broadband solutions and strategic partnerships.

I am writing to you with an urgent plea regarding KCNA's plan to disconnect Accelecom (OpenFiber Kentucky Company, LLC) from the KentuckyWired state fiber network. KCNA has issued notices to networks utilizing KentuckyWired that Accelecom, KentuckyWired's exclusive wholesale provider, will be severed from KentuckyWired in no less than 30 days, which could leave many communities and organizations without service or with substantially degraded connectivity. As of now, there is nothing stopping KCNA from moving forward with this disconnection. **This matter is of critical importance to Kentucky's infrastructure and economy, and time is running out.** In my capacity as CEO of a local ISP that both partners with Accelecom and serves Kentucky communities, I urge all parties to consider the following points before irreparable harm is done.

KCNA Must Explain the Rationale for Disconnection

First and foremost, KCNA owes the public a clear explanation for why it is taking this drastic step. I call on KCNA to explain and justify the reasoning behind the disconnection decision. Thus far, customers and partners have only been told that the contract with Accelecom was terminated, but not why such a termination—and the resulting network upheaval—became necessary. Was there a specific breach, performance issue, or financial reason prompting this action? The lack of transparency is unacceptable given the stakes. An open, detailed justification from KCNA would allow stakeholders to understand the rationale and assess its validity. Without such explanation, this decision appears arbitrary and harmful, eroding trust in the Commonwealth's stewardship of the taxpayer owned network. We respectfully request that KCNA publicly articulate the motivations and evidence behind disconnecting Accelecom from KentuckyWired. The people of Kentucky—especially those of us in the tech and business community investing in the state's digital future—deserve to know why this disruption is being pursued.

Ensure Continuity of Critical Services with a Viable Transition Plan

If KCNA is determined to move forward despite widespread concerns, it must not do so without a viable transition plan that guarantees no interruption to critical services. Disconnecting a major network service provider on short notice, with no alternative in place, is a recipe for disaster. As the leader of an ISP that

interconnects with Accelecom, I am deeply worried about our region's essential connections. Lives and livelihoods are on the line. We demand that KCNA, before unplugging anything, present a comprehensive plan to maintain service for all affected entities. There should be zero downtime for the end-users who rely on this network. In particular, the following critical services and institutions must not be allowed to go dark due to this dispute:

- Healthcare facilities (hospitals, clinics, EMS): Many rural and urban healthcare providers rely on KentuckyWired connectivity (delivered via Accelecom) for electronic health records, telemedicine, and communication. Any outage could jeopardize patient care and emergency services.
- Independent Internet Service Providers (ISPs): Local ISPs across Kentucky use Accelecom's KentuckyWired access as the "middle-mile" backhaul to deliver last-mile broadband in underserved areas. If that backhaul is cut, entire towns and rural communities could lose internet access, rolling back efforts to close the digital divide.
- Data centers and tech hubs: Accelecom's transport network connects to local data centers and internet exchange points (like the Paducah Internet Exchange) that facilitate cloud services and enterprise operations. Continuous, high-speed connectivity is the lifeblood of these facilities. An abrupt disconnection would isolate Kentucky's data centers at the exact time the state is trying to attract more of them.
- Essential businesses and government services: Banks, manufacturers, universities, and government offices that handle critical transactions and data over these networks cannot tolerate even brief outages. Public safety communications, law enforcement databases, and educational networks (which KentuckyWired was built to support) all depend on reliable connectivity. Disrupting these services, even temporarily, poses an unacceptable risk to public welfare and the economy.

KCNA must guarantee that each of the above sectors will have an equivalent or better connectivity solution in place before Accelecom is disconnected. If KCNA cannot provide that assurance, it must halt the disconnection process. The Commonwealth's commitment should be to seamless continuity of service. Indeed, KCNA's stated mission with KentuckyWired has been to expand and harden connectivity across Kentucky—not to introduce new single points of failure. The KentuckyWired project was intended to help internet companies reach rural areas and to attract businesses to build in Kentucky, goals that cannot be met if critical network links are severed without backup plans. We urge KCNA to work with Accelecom and providers like Quad State Internet on a transition strategy that protects every Kentucky customer from harm. If cooperation from Accelecom is needed to facilitate this, then mediation should be pursued vigorously, not a unilateral cutoff. In short, if the disconnection is truly unavoidable, it must be done responsibly with Kentucky's hospitals, businesses, and communities kept whole.

Strategic Importance of the Quad State–Accelecom Partnership

I want to emphasize the strategic importance of the relationship between Quad State Internet and Accelecom for Kentucky's digital infrastructure. Our companies have established a close partnership that has directly fostered growth and resiliency in the region's internet connectivity. Last year, Quad State Internet and Accelecom interconnected our networks to better serve Kentucky and Illinois. This collaboration was a game-changer for our area: it created new, geographically diverse routes to the global Internet for our customers and improved overall network reliability. By linking Quad State's Paducah-area fiber and the Paducah Internet Exchange with Accelecom's statewide fiber backbone, we achieved greater resiliency against outages and enabled faster, more direct connections for countless end-users. For example, our partnership provides seamless transport into the Paducah Internet Exchange (PIE) – the largest Internet Exchange Point in Kentucky – allowing local ISPs, enterprises, and carriers to peer directly and exchange traffic efficiently. This means data can route locally (improving

speed and reducing latency) instead of detouring out-of-state, and there are alternate fiber paths if one network segment goes down. All of these benefits make Kentucky's internet stronger and more reliable.

It's important to note that Quad State Internet competes with Accelecom in certain markets – yet we chose to collaborate for the greater good. Collaboration has brought more value to Kentucky than rivalry alone ever could. Our experience proves that when telecom companies work together, Kentucky's businesses and residents win. Healthy competition is crucial to spur innovation and fair pricing, but cooperation is equally essential in building out infrastructure that is robust and far-reaching. By sharing expertise and interconnecting assets, we've extended high-speed service to places that might otherwise have been too difficult or costly to reach. In short, the Quad State–Accelecom partnership shows that competition and collaboration are not mutually exclusive – in fact, in the realm of infrastructure, they must go hand-in-hand. I encourage KCNA and state leadership to foster an environment of fair competition with partnership. Do not pit providers against each other to Kentucky's detriment; instead, encourage them to interlink and reinforce the network of networks that keeps our state connected. Undoing the relationship between Accelecom and its partners (like us) will set us back, whereas nurturing it further could accelerate Kentucky's broadband advancements.

Accelecom's Network Supports Kentucky's Digital Ambitions

Accelecom's transport network – much of which runs over the KentuckyWired backbone – is vital in connecting Kentucky communities and local data centers. This privately operated network overlays the public KentuckyWired fiber and delivers services to countless institutions and commercial providers across the Commonwealth. In doing so, Accelecom has effectively become an extension of KentuckyWired's promise: to knit together all 120 counties with high-capacity fiber. The state has an explicit goal of making Kentucky a regional hub for data centers and technology investment. We are already seeing significant progress toward that goal. For instance, a major eight-building data center campus (Project Lincoln) has been proposed in Oldham County, promising up to \$6 billion in investment. In Louisville, developers are planning the Commonwealth's first hyper-scale data center, slated to consume hundreds of megawatts of power when it opens in 2026. These projects, and the businesses they attract, will require world-class connectivity linking every corner of Kentucky. High-bandwidth transport lines, low-latency routes between cities, and reliable links to internet exchanges are all absolutely essential to support such growth.

Right now, Accelecom's network provides those very capabilities. It delivers high-speed fiber connections to regional hubs, facilitates cloud and enterprise services, and ties into local exchanges and major carrier backbones. In short, Accelecom is a key piece of the infrastructure puzzle that makes Kentucky an attractive place for tech investment. KCNA's actions risk sabotaging that goal and undermining statewide progress. By forcibly disconnecting Accelecom, KCNA would be pulling out a critical thread in Kentucky's connectivity fabric. Many of Accelecom's routes and customers might suddenly lose their main artery to the internet. The redundancy and reach achieved through public-private collaboration would shrink. This not only harms current users but sends a terrible signal to any future investor or tech company looking at Kentucky: it suggests the state might not honor partnerships or maintain stable networks. The KentuckyWired initiative was meant to strengthen our digital ecosystem and encourage companies to build on top of it. If KCNA cuts off one of the primary companies that did exactly that, it undermines the very mission of KentuckyWired and could deter others from utilizing the network in the future. We ask you to consider the long-term ramifications: Kentucky's bid to become a data center and high-tech hub depends on trust and stability in its broadband infrastructure. This disconnection threatens to roll back the hard-won gains in connectivity and tarnish Kentucky's reputation in the tech industry. It is, in effect, pulling the rug out from under our shared digital future.

A Call to Action for Senator Carroll and Representative Rudy

To Kentucky state leaders Senator Danny Carroll and Representative Steven Rudy: we urge you to leverage your influence, oversight, and resources to intervene in this imminent disconnection. Both of you represent regions in Western Kentucky that will be directly impacted if Accelecom is unplugged—areas that Quad State Internet and Accelecom jointly serve, including Paducah and the surrounding Purchase region. You have been strong advocates for economic development and improving infrastructure in our Commonwealth. Now, we need your leadership more than ever to prevent an avoidable crisis. Please use your offices to press pause on KCNA's plan and bring all parties to the table to broker a solution.

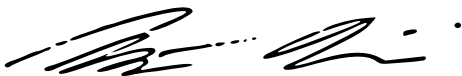
We ask that you urgently engage with KCNA and the Governor's office to stop the disconnection from moving forward. Legislative inquiry or public hearings may be warranted to shine light on why this action is happening and to ensure that the public interest is protected. As elected representatives, you can demand accountability and transparency from KCNA on behalf of your constituents. Additionally, your support in facilitating a negotiated resolution would be invaluable. Perhaps the contract issues or disputes that led to this can be resolved without cutting off service—but that will only happen if cooler heads come together under the guidance of leaders like you. We also encourage you to coordinate with other state officials and Kentucky's congressional delegation if needed; a broad coalition may be necessary to underscore how serious this matter is. The goal should be to maintain uninterrupted broadband service while any legal or contractual disputes are sorted out through proper channels.

In summary, we are not asking for special treatment for any company—we are asking for protecting Kentucky's connectivity and progress. Senator Carroll and Representative Rudy, your constituents include hospitals, schools, small businesses, and internet users who will bear the brunt of a disrupted network. Please champion their cause by helping to forge a cooperative path forward. Kentucky's high-tech aspirations and the well-being of our communities depend on it. Do not let an impulsive cut-off undo the progress we've made. Instead, let this challenge be resolved through collaboration, so that we emerge with an even stronger, more resilient network for the Commonwealth.

Conclusion: Kentucky stands at a crossroads in its digital development. The decisions made in the next few weeks will echo for years, determining whether we continue to build a resilient, cutting-edge broadband ecosystem or sow distrust and disunity in our infrastructure. I write not only as the CEO of Quad State Internet, but as a Kentuckian who cares deeply about our state's future. We have shown that public and private cooperation can dramatically improve connectivity in Kentucky. Let's not throw that away. I call on KCNA to justify its actions and, if it proceeds, to do so responsibly with zero loss of service. I implore all stakeholders to remember our shared mission: to connect Kentucky, not fracture it. And I appeal to our elected officials to step in and guide this process toward a positive outcome.

Thank you for your time and prompt attention to this urgent matter. I remain hopeful that through dialogue and leadership, we can avert a disaster and instead find a solution that keeps Kentucky moving forward. The partnerships, competition, and infrastructure we have built are not mutually exclusive; together, they form the backbone of Kentucky's digital future. Let us protect and strengthen that backbone, not break it. If you'd like to discuss this matter further feel free to reach out to my office.

Sincerely,



Preston Louis Ursini
Chief Executive Officer
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