

Truth in Testimony Disclosure Form

In accordance with Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5)*, of the *Rules of the House of Representatives*, witnesses are asked to disclose the following information. Please complete this form electronically by filling in the provided blanks.

Committee: _____

Subcommittee: _____

Hearing Date: _____

Hearing Subject:

Witness Name: David P Berman

Position/Title: Co-Chair, Connect Columbia

Witness Type: Governmental Non-governmental

Are you representing yourself or an organization? Self Organization

If you are representing an organization, please list what entity or entities you are representing:

Connect Columbia, an unincorporated citizens committee

If you are a non-governmental witness, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) related to the hearing's subject matter that you or the organization(s) you represent at this hearing received in the current calendar year and previous two calendar years. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract. *If necessary, attach additional sheet(s) to provide more information.*

If you are a non-governmental witness, please list any contracts or payments originating with a foreign government and related to the hearing's subject matter that you or the organization(s) you represent at this hearing received in the current year and previous two calendar years. Include the amount and country of origin of each contract or payment. *If necessary, attach additional sheet(s) to provide more information.*

None

False Statements Certification

Knowingly providing material false information to this committee/subcommittee, or knowingly concealing material information from this committee/subcommittee, is a crime (18 U.S.C. § 1001). This form will be made part of the hearing record.



Witness signature

10/8/19

Date

Please attach, when applicable, the following documents to this disclosure. Check the box(es) to acknowledge that you have done so.

- Written statement of proposed testimony
- Curriculum vitae or biography

*Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5), of the U.S. House of Representatives provides:

(5)(A) Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof.

(B) In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the current calendar year or either of the two previous calendar years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing.

(C) The disclosure referred to in subdivision (B) shall include—

(i) the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing; and

(ii) the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(D) Such statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy or security of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness appears.

Statement to Congressman Delgado and FCC Commissioner Starks by David Berman, Co-Chair of Connect Columbia

Thank you Congressman Delgado for this opportunity. I am the Co-Chair of Connect Columbia, a citizen's action committee made up of elected officials and interested residents that have banded together to bring true broadband to the people of Columbia County. My Co-Chair, Patti Matheney is also here.

Let me define True Broadband in 2019 terms—a minimum of a symmetrical 100 Mbps/sec growing to a symmetrical 1 gigabit within five years. The Commission's definition is considerably out of date and needs to be upgraded immediately. Many of our international competitors are already at the gigabit level.

With that out of the way, let me take just a moment to describe the current conditions in Columbia County. We were fortunate to receive over \$30 million from Governor Cuomo's broadband initiative and CAF funding. This has taken us to coverage for most of our residents but still leaving huge gaps in our geography. Why? Because the economics require density of potential subscribers which effectively penalizes rural areas. The State and CAF money were used to fiber those areas where density made the economics work and then a very confusing satellite overlay was applied to theoretically give everyone access which it decidedly did not. As I'm sure the Commissioner is aware the use of high latency, moderate to low throughput satellite technology is merely a band-aid that cannot meet current demand much less the exponentially growing demand.

So how do we fill in the holes to give everyone access to true high-speed broadband that has scalable technology to meet growing speed and capacity requirements?

Even though current Federal programs are constructed to fix the basic problem of access, their requirements effectively preclude those they are designed to help. An example is a recent program that required an area to have 90 percent of the population to lack coverage—sounds logical doesn't it? So, consider a farming area with a central village. The village population overwhelmingly exceeds the farming one and therefore 90% can't be achieved. The measurement is correct economically from a cost per person served basis but fails miserably to provide access to rural areas where modern agriculture requires cutting edge technology to effectively manage the process of growing our food supply not to mention the children of farmers who need access to all the educational tools and resources that are now required.

The only solution to this issue is to base local, state and federal programs on the goal of reaching every address in the United States. That means scrapping the use of census blocks to define coverage, availability, financing, etc. Very simply census blocks are both confusing and lead to some bizarre results. A perfect example is the street behind my house—German Church Road. Like many streets, it bisects two census blocks, one which was granted money for broadband and the other wasn't, so a provider doesn't get reimbursed for providing service to the other side of the street.

Clearly every address that gets electricity should get broadband. Just like electricity which runs many devices essential to our lives, large capacity communication capability is far more than voice, internet, email and tweets. We are still in the early stages of what big pipe connectivity can do beyond those mentioned with efficiencies in health care at the top of the list.

It is no longer practical to separate internet access from voice and television since they all come over the same wire, fiber or frequency. Two out of three can't be ubiquitous while one remains unavailable. It is more important than ever in this economy to ensure every business and every person is connected to the content they want just as they can speak to anyone via traditional POTS. The Commission as a regulatory body needs to expand its vision to encourage expansion of existing technologies and leave the door wide open for new ones that will enable even more ways to both connect and ensure security.

Finally, Congress must act to first rationalize the myriad number of competing programs that ostensibly are in place to facilitate the expansion of broadband and then expedite the actual work being done, completed and importantly measured so that suppliers meet the needs of consumers.

Thank you and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

David P Berman

Co-Chair, Connect Columbia

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David P Berman

Co-Chair, Connect Columbia

A resident of Ghent, David Berman is a technology/media consultant with a long career in those complimentary fields.

His career began in the world of closed-circuit television where he produced the broadcasts of several of Muhammad Ali's biggest fights. This led to a 5-year stint at CBS Sports where he was Managing Director of the European operation based in London.

He returned to New York as Vice President of CBS Broadcast International in charge of Production, Operations and Administration for 11 years.

That was followed by 7 years at the first global private satellite company, PanAmSat, where he led the global sales effort growing the company from \$45 million to \$1 billion.

More recently he has been a serial entrepreneur starting the first file transfer company connecting the Hollywood studios to the world's television stations—a significant use of broadband technology with encryption. He then led the first sports league for professional video gamers which focused his understanding of the need for much greater capacity.

Currently he is a consultant to several Silicon Valley companies while serving as the Co-Chair of Connect Columbia, Chair of the Ghent Broadband Committee and on the Columbia County Broadband Committee. Every facet of his career from the beginning to present day has required more and more bandwidth.