

# North Louisiana is Ready. Why Isn't Washington?

**A Letter from Brad Warden, Owner and  
CEO of SkyRider Communications**

In this letter, Mr. Warden outlines the challenges his company faces surrounding the BEAD program, shares his continued willingness to participate in good faith, and expresses both his respect for the current administration and his growing concern about whether rural providers like SkyRider are truly being heard.

**Published:** April 16, 2025

**By:** Brad Warden, CEO SkyRider Communications



 **SKYRIDER**  
COMMUNICATIONS

**Mr. Lutnick,**

SkyRider is a small Telecom carrier in North Louisiana. We have been in business for over 20 Years. We were awarded a grant through the BEAD program of \$5.9M. That requires a match of \$1.9M that we are prepared to do. This may be a small amount for you but for us it is considerable. This is a fiber build in a very rural area of Louisiana. This is not our first award of this type. Previously we were awarded \$3.9M through the Louisiana Gumbo which was successfully completed on time.

To prepare a fiber build takes a lot of time and effort. I am not in a position to bid on something and not know what it will cost to build. There are several companies that will have a large investment along with the required match to build what they won in this bid. Our network is designed. We have cleared the Historical and Environmental requirements. We have funds lined up. We have BABA vendors selected and are ready to place orders. We have contractors lined up to place the conduit and handholes underground. We even have our State permits in hand. We will begin construction within 30 days of final approval. We have a sizable investment in the work that has already been done. We have added staff in the anticipation of this construction.

Louisiana was finally first at something. NTIA approval. Louisiana, through its ConnectLA program ran a very complex bid program. Awards for areas were made. We were expecting to sign our Grant Agreement with the State on March 1.

Now we wait. I heard about the Speed for Bead act. It appears that the Speed for Bead act needs a new name because it has only slowed things down.

You mentioned DEI in an article. That we needed to get rid of that. We in North Louisiana do not even know how to spell DEI. I did not see anything in the Grant documents referencing DEI.

I am a Trump supporter. I love what he is doing and thank God he is in office to straighten out the mess in Washington DC. I cannot imagine how busy you are with the Tariff negotiations and other directives you are under.

But, BEAD especially for Louisiana needs to move forward. If you want to make changes, then please do it. Time delays and many States being awarded at the same time will affect the price that we pay for contractors and the price we pay for materials.

I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,

**Brad Warden**  
**President / CEO**



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