
Next Century Cities Statement Criticizing 6th Circuit's Broadband Choice Decision

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Wed, Aug 10, 2016 at 1:25 PM

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For Immediate Release
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Next Century Cities Strongly Criticizes Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals for Overturning FCC Decision on Local Broadband Choice

Washington, DC (August 10, 2016) – In a move that impacts Next Century Cities members Chattanooga, TN and Wilson, NC, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit today released a [decision](#) overturning the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) ruling allowing these two cities the opportunity to make their own local decisions on broadband access.

"Today's court decision is a blow to communities in Tennessee and North Carolina that were fighting for more accessible, affordable internet access for their residents, and will sadly prevent the expansion of each city's broadband network to neighboring underserved communities," said Deb Socia, Executive Director of Next Century Cities. "The 147 mayors and city leaders nationwide who are members of Next Century Cities value competition and unique solutions that work for each community. Today's court ruling is a setback in the fight to ensure access to next-generation broadband for more Americans, and Next Century Cities is disappointed by this decision."

Next Century Cities, a nonprofit membership organization of over 145 mayors and city leaders nationwide committed to ensuring access to fast, affordable, and reliable internet access for their citizens, welcomed the FCC's ruling in February 2015 that allowed two of the organization's member communities to expand their networks. Next Century Cities joined the Institute for Local Self-Reliance in filing an [amicus brief](#) that argued the state laws constituted a barrier to broadband deployment, and before the FCC decision, 38 Next Century Cities mayors sent a [letter](#) to the FCC urging the Commissioners to protect a core principle of local internet choice.

"We thank the FCC for fighting for the rights of local communities, and thank Mayor Andy Berke of Chattanooga, TN and Mayor Bruce Rose of Wilson, NC for standing up for their communities' rights to local choice and the broadband solutions that work for their citizens," Deb Socia continued. "We hope that this decision will be appealed and that the rights of communities to make their own broadband decisions will be respected."

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Next Century Cities is a city-to-city initiative founded to support communities and their elected leaders, including mayors and other officials, as they seek to ensure that all have access to fast, affordable, and reliable Internet. As innovative municipalities across the country recognize the importance of leveraging gigabit level Internet to attract new businesses and create jobs, improve health care and education, and connect residents to new opportunities, Next Century Cities will celebrate these successes, demonstrate their value, and help other cities to realize the full power of truly high-speed, affordable, and accessible broadband. For more information, visit www.nextcenturycities.org.
