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Voqal Welcomes Research Showing Economic Benefits of EBS

May 15, 2019 – Voqal welcomes the research presented today at the National Collaborative for Digital Equity's 2nd Annual Invitational Summit by the Schools Health and Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition and Dr. Raul Katz. This research clearly demonstrates the economic benefits of awarding the remaining wireless Educational Broadband Service (EBS) licenses to Tribal Nations and educational institutions.

The following statement can be attributed to Voqal Director of Telecommunications Policy Mark Colwell.

“EBS is a critical tool helping to close the digital where it is licensed. Dr. Katz’s research provides strong evidence that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) should use priority windows to license the remaining EBS spectrum to Tribal Nations and educational entities rather than simply selling this important public resource to the highest bidder via a costly and time-consuming auction. The results are clear, providing EBS spectrum to Tribal Nations and educational entities would:

- Reduce the digital divide by 18 percent, providing internet access to over 8.3 million individuals.
- Increase the national GDP by \$70.93 billion, providing a significant boost to the U.S. economy, especially in rural areas.
- Reduce the rural homework gap by nearly 30%, connecting approximately 196,000 more rural students.
- Increase the number of high school graduates by over 66,000 students.

The research clearly shows that using educational licensing windows provides greater public benefits than an overlay auction. As strong believers of the power of EBS to create a more educated and empowered public, Voqal believes the FCC has a clear path forward for maximizing the potential of EBS by putting it in the hands of those best poised to use it to bridge the digital divide and create a more connected and prosperous United States.”

About Voqal

Voqal is a national collaboration of EBS (Educational Broadband Service) licensees that work to advance social equity by creating an educated, empowered and engaged public. Voqal makes grants and impact investments, expands internet access and digital equity, offers fellowships and protects the public airwaves. Our efforts focus on the education and enrichment of all, not just those who are well-off socially, economically and politically.