

PROTESTS

The enacting legislation requires the Department of Information Technology to make all applications publicly available by posting on the department's website for a period of at least 30 days prior to award. During the 30-day period, any interested party may submit comments to the Secretary of DIT concerning any pending application. A provider of broadband services may submit a protest of any application on the grounds the proposed project covers an area that is not an eligible area as defined within the GREAT Program. ***This is the only criteria by which an application may be challenged.***

Protests shall be submitted in writing, accompanied by all relevant supporting documentation, and shall be considered by the Office in connection with the review of the application. An applicant will be notified of a protest. NCBIO may request additional information from the applicant.

A protest may be denied, granted or granted in part. If a protest is granted in part the applicant will be notified and allowed 7 days to amend their application for the purposes of revising the proposed project area and budget (which may affect their score). For applications with filed protests, the Secretary of DIT shall issue a written decision to the protesting party at least 15 days prior to the approval of that application.

Details on timeline of the Protest window, where to view applications, how to submit comments, or for broadband providers to submit protests, will be available on the DIT/BIO's GREAT Grant Program Webpage <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/Great-Grant/>.

Applications will be posted as .pdfs, with corresponding digital files posted as well.

Protests will require the following information:

- Name of Broadband Provider Submitting Protest
- Contact Information for Protest Submission (Name, phone, email)
- Application Being Protested (Name of Broadband Provider Applicant, Plus County)
- A list of census blocks that contain the area(s) being disputed.
- A narrative of why the areas within these blocks are believed to be in dispute - as to being an eligible area for the GREAT Program.
- Supporting Documentation: Inclusion of detail and supporting documentation on why the locations within these service areas are believed to be ineligible. Protests should be specific and speak to specific locations within proposed service areas.

Note: One Protest Form should be submitted for each Application/County being disputed. The list of census blocks in question is required for tracking purposes, however, more granular information on the specific service area in question must be presented with the Protest.