

Docket Number: TC15-069
Subject Matter: First Data Request
Request to: Qwest Corporation dba CenturyLink QC and Dex Media, Inc.
Request from: South Dakota Public Utilities Commission Staff
Date of Request: November 24, 2015
Responses Due: December 11, 2015

- 1-2. Page 6 of the application states, in reference to the number of households without internet access, that “likely about or under 10% now in South Dakota, and continuing to shrink,” referencing page 10 of the U. S. Census Bureau’s 2013 report “Computer and Internet Use in the United States.” However, page 10 of the report says that an estimated 76% of South Dakotans live in a household with high-speed Internet use. Thus, 24% do not live in a household with high-speed Internet use. (High-speed Internet use in the article is defined as a household with “a paid Internet service type other than dial-up alone.”) Explain why the number stated in the application and the number in the source do not match.

RESPONSE:

A report published by the Pew Research Center in February 2014 (available at: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/02/25/the-web-at-25-in-the-u-s>) (“Pew Report”) stated that 87% of U.S. households use the Internet according to their survey in January 2014. Based on the two reports and usage growth trends it is therefore estimated that current South Dakota adult Internet use is over 90% because: 1) the Pew Report showed consistent increases in household Internet use in nearly every year since 1995; 2) a greater than 3% increase in Internet usage since January 2014 would be consistent with recent usage trends; 3) South Dakota Internet usage trends are closely equivalent to national trends according to the Census Bureau data.

Not all of the estimated 90% of South Dakota Internet user households currently subscribe to “high-speed Internet,” which the Census Bureau defines as “other than dial-up,” such as DSL, cable modem, and fiber-optic. (Footnote 12, p. 5, <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/acs-internet2013.pdf>). Thus the percent of all household Internet users (76%) does not match the extrapolated Census data, because some adults access the Internet using dial up, which is not considered to be “high speed.”