

**For Immediate Release**



**Contact:**

Bruce Forey

Office: 830.885.8394

Cell: 830.660.9112

[bruce.forey@gvtc.net](mailto:bruce.forey@gvtc.net)

[@GVTC\\_Com](#)

**FCC Commissioner O’Rielly meets with GVTC executive team**

SMITHSON VALLEY, June 4, 2015 — Federal Communications Commissioner Michael O’Rielly traveled from Washington D.C. to the Texas Hill Country to learn more about the challenges of connecting broadband in rural America. The Commissioner and Amy Bender, Wireline Advisor to the Commissioner, stopped by GVTC headquarters, just north of San Antonio, to visit with company executives, while on his way to a conference in Dallas, TX.

As FCC Commissioner, one of Mr. O’Rielly’s goals is to ensure that all Americans have access to modern communications networks. In rural areas, there are significant cost challenges that slow the progress. GVTC delivers fiber broadband speeds up to 1 Gbps to the majority of its customers in its 2,000 square mile service region. The Commissioner wanted to learn about GVTC’s business model for achieving that penetration level and what stands in the way from connecting all customers with fiber broadband.

“My purpose is to get a firsthand understanding of the problems companies or individuals are facing,” O’Rielly said. “It’s also to hear about GVTC’s experiences in providing broadband in their territory and the services that consumers enjoy.”

GVTC Vice President Robert Hunt, who is also chairman of USTelecom, shared concerns about the current system for distributing Universal Service Funds (USF). This funding is critical for telecommunications companies like GVTC to offset the high costs of building and operating fiber broadband networks in rural areas. The majority of USF is allocated for expanding telephone connections. With landline telephone sales declining across the country, GVTC and many rural providers would like the federal government to expand the program to include costs associated with broadband deployment.

“Robert was able to articulate problems that rural carriers are having with the current structure of support at the FCC and with states, as well, so I thought that was a very healthy conversation,” the Commissioner said. “These are issues I’m already committed to trying to resolve and working with all of the interested parties in finding a solution that we can all support.”

“I would like to thank Commissioner O’Rielly for taking time out to visit our part of the country to learn about GVTC,” CEO Ritchie Sorrells said. “What a great opportunity to take our story back to our nation’s capital and possibly influence policy to make it more cost effective to connect fiber broadband to more rural customers.”

*About GVTC:*

GVTC is a full-service communications provider offering high-speed Internet, digital cable TV, phone and interactive home security monitoring to residential and business customers. GVTC is the first to deliver 1 Gbps Internet speeds to more than 40,000 customers in areas of far north San Antonio, the Texas Hill Country and South Central Texas. In June 2014, the company formed the GVTC GigaRegion® with the cities of Boerne, Bulverde and Gonzales. Through this unique partnership, GVTC and the GigaRegion® cities proactively market gigabit availability, along with the attributes of each city, to generate economic development for the area.

GVTC has received numerous awards for business excellence which include being selected a *Broadband Communities Magazine*, Top 100 Fiber to the Home Company, seven consecutive years. GVTC was also selected as the winner of the 2014 Broadband Vision Award for service provider. The *San Antonio Express-News* and *San Antonio Business Journal* have recognized GVTC as an exemplary employer, on multiple occasions. The company’s charitable arm, The GVTC Foundation, has donated more than \$1.8 million dollars to worthy causes, since its establishment in 2006. Learn more at [GVTC.com](http://GVTC.com)