

# **Bond Case Briefs**

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## **Broadband Law Could Force Rural Residents Off Information Superhighway.**

WILSON, N.C. — On the first day of the harvest last week, a line of trucks brimming with sweet potatoes rolled into Vick Family Farms, headed for a new packing plant that runs on ultrafast internet.

The potatoes were tagged with online bar codes to detail the plots where they grew, their types of seed, and dates and times picked. On a conveyor belt, 50 flashing cameras captured and sent images of the spuds to an online program that sorted the Carolina Golds by size and quality and kicked them into boxes.

The Vick family built the plant only after the nearby city of Wilson agreed early last year to bring its municipal broadband service to the 7,000-acre farm. Since the plant opened in October, the farm's production and sales to Europe have jumped.

But now, after a legal battle between state and federal officials over broadband, the farm and hundreds of other customers in the eastern region of the state may get unplugged.

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