

# STATE OF ALASKA

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

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April 16, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling  
Assistant Secretary for Communications  
and Information  
National Telecommunications and  
Information Administration  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Strickling,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Alaska's applications for the second round of funding for the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). As you know, Governor Parnell did not choose to recommend specific projects in the first round of BTOP funding for several reasons, including competitive fairness to private sector applicants. For the same reasons, we do not believe it is appropriate for the State of Alaska to recommend specific projects for the second round of BTOP funding.

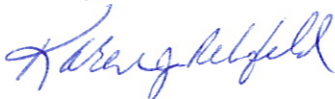
However, we would like to emphasize the importance of BTOP to Alaska. Alaska has the largest unserved and underserved geographic area of any state in the nation. The nine Alaska applications submitted for round two would all provide a worthwhile improvement in broadband access for Alaska's rural residents.

As in round one, we recommend that a higher priority be placed on the projects that score well in the NTIA's technical review, with designs that can be affordably operated and maintained, and that will have a long life span. Affordability of service should also be a key factor in awarding BTOP grants. Much of rural Alaska has chronically high unemployment, making it difficult for many residents to afford broadband service unless it is affordably priced.

I am enclosing three prior letters for your reference that provide more details on the needs for, and benefits of improved broadband service for Alaska's rural residents.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Karen J. Rehfeld  
Director

Enclosures