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TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

June 1, 2010

Mr. Lawrence Strickling Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information US Department of Commerce Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Strickling:

The State of Maryland appreciates the opportunity to comment on round two applications submitted to the Department of Commerce for funding consideration under the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP).

Maryland's Department of Business and Economic Development and Department of Information Technology have established a strategy for broadband deployment and adoption. Key elements of the strategy include:

- Providing constituents broadband Internet access at their residence;
- *Providing anchor institutions broadband Internet access that can be used by a majority, if not all, individuals served by that institution;*
- Increasing and improving the delivery and quality of services by the State government through broadband and expanding the availability of technology;
- Creating permanent facilities for broadband Internet access;
- Providing affordable broadband Internet access to businesses throughout the State, allowing businesses located in rural areas access to the broadband at comparable rates to those located in metropolitan areas;
- Deploying middle mile networks throughout the State that support competitive environments for lastmile providers.

The State has previously identified areas within its borders that are un-served and underserved, including its eastern shore, southern counties (Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's), and western counties (Allegany, Garrett, and Washington).

Based on this set of criteria and our strong desire to put forth a proposal that meets the standards that were not achieved for infrastructure projects in round one of the BTOP program, the State, through its Department of Information Technology (DoIT), led the creation of a proposal that will provide the key foundation of state-wide broadband availability. DoIT's *One Maryland Broadband Network* project seeks to build middle mile infrastructure and connect 1144 community anchors and other points of interest including 469 schools (K-12), 311 public safety facilities, 255 government facilities, 68 libraries, and 18 community colleges while simultaneously providing middle mile broadband infrastructure throughout the state, bridging the rural, suburban, and urban areas of Maryland. Additionally, the middle mile fiber deployed in the identified underserved areas of the State can be leveraged to support last-mile ISP connections bringing broadband to residences and businesses in the most underserved areas of the state. As a part of this project, DoIT has

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partnered with the Maryland Broadband Cooperative, a non-profit telecommunications provider serving western, southern, and eastern Maryland, to provide this "open access" in these critically underserved areas. Because the *One Maryland Broadband Network* was submitted by the State, is financially supported by the State, supports additional State initiatives such as a health IT exchange and a next-generation 911 system, and addresses all of Maryland's broadband goals, I offer my strongest support for that particular project.

Additionally, I would like to offer support for the following projects that are also consistent with the broadband goals of the State:

Broadband Infrastructure Projects: (Comprehensive Community Infrastructure)

Project Name Baltimore City Public Schools Fiber Optic Network Initiative Elimination of Digital Divide Frederick, Maryland Broadband Educational Access in Life Reinvestment and STEM (BEARS) Organization Baltimore City Public School Systems Housing Authority of the City of Frederick, MD Powell Educational Consultants

Public Computing Centers / Sustainable Broadband Adoption

Project Name	<u>Organization</u>
Minority Access Public Computer Center to Assist Youth, Job Seekers,	
Seniors and Future Technicians	Minority Access, INC.
Morgan State University Access-Baltimore Initiative	Morgan State University
Reid Public Computer Centers Coalition	Reid Community Development Corporation
Broadband for Maryland's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children	Broadband for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Sustainable Broadband for Education in Worcester County, MD	Bloosurf, LLC

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the NTIA with these comments.

Sincerely, Governor

cc: The Maryland Congressional Delegation Matt Gallagher Christian Johansson Elliot Schlanger Colm O'Comartun Gregory Urban