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Governor

State of New Hampshire

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April 30, 2010

The Honorable Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: State Review of NTIA Applications

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has requested the New Hampshire Governor's Office participate in the State Consultation Phase for the second round of funding under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). I appreciate this opportunity to comment.

To ensure a wide range of perspectives and knowledge, we convened a team of representatives from New Hampshire's Department of Resources and Economic Development, the Public Utilities Commission, the Office of the Consumer Advocate, the New Hampshire Telecommunications Advisory Board, the Department of Justice, Department of Information Technology and the Governor's Office to review the New Hampshire applications. The group assessed the information provided to the State and assisted in preparing this response. Consistent with NTIA's request, the review did not include a financial or operational analysis of the proposals. This team reviewed projects with a focus on:

- Identifying proposals that meet the criteria referenced in the NOFA and thus have the highest possibility of securing funding for the State of New Hampshire.
- Identifying proposals that would expand broadband access to the greatest number of New Hampshire citizens.

NTIA identified 34 applications with some degree of activity related to New Hampshire. Given the large number of applications, the information provided by NTIA, and the need for timely review, the team established a review process. First, the team reviewed the summaries provided by NTIA. Proposals were then grouped based upon program type (e.g., infrastructure, SBA, Public Computer Center), and applicants of interest were provided with the opportunity to submit additional information and a complete application.

Since 2000, New Hampshire has worked aggressively through our Telecommunications Advisory Board and key partners to advocate for increased deployment of broadband services throughout the state. Throughout the ARRA process, I have encouraged interested stakeholders to work together to create proposals that meet the requirements of the NOFA, and that will deliver sustainable open access broadband to New Hampshire citizens and businesses.

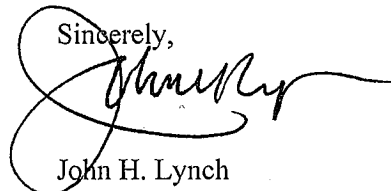
Highly Recommended Project

To best achieve those objectives, the State *highly recommends* the Network New Hampshire Now (NNHN) application submitted by the University of New Hampshire (EZ Grant ID#4248). The NNHN proposal refines New Hampshire's previous submittal to the first round BTOP NOFA, aligns with the President's recently announced broadband plans, and addresses the seven criteria for success that NTIA identified for round two. This proposal has three key components, each of which is critical to the expansion of broadband in New Hampshire: Middle Mile, Last Mile and Public Safety, all of which will be supported through the efforts of the New Hampshire Broadband Director's Position. The structures and services offered in the proposal are sustainable for the long term.

The core of this application is a private and public partnership among the University and, Community College systems, State agencies, municipal organizations, service providers, and Fast Roads, a last mile non-profit collaboration within the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority. The application received 97 letters of support from stakeholders, including the New Hampshire Congressional delegation, educators, community anchor institutions, business groups and service providers. The NNHN proposal would create a strong middle mile backbone that would support network services for core institutions, service providers, and citizens across a large area of the state and would allow for pilot projects for delivery of broadband service at the local level.

Attached to my letter is additional information on the highly recommended University of New Hampshire NNHN proposal. In addition there is information on our two recommended Sustainable Broadband Adoption applications and one Public Computer Center application.

Thank you for providing the State of New Hampshire the opportunity to comment upon the broadband proposals. We stand ready to assist with the process and implementation of the projects selected by NTIA. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

John H. Lynch
Governor

Attachments:

- Attachment A: New Hampshire Review Team Recommendation

Attachment A: New Hampshire Review Team Recommendation

Highly Recommended Project Comprehensive Community Infrastructure

NNHN Proposal (EZ Grant ID#4248): Community, educational, and technology leaders created the Network New Hampshire Now (NNHN) proposal, to build an integrated, open access middle mile and last mile fiber optic network with a focus on unserved and underserved areas of the state. NNHN will significantly increase the capacity and capability of the State's telecommunications infrastructure and make future last mile build-out easier and more cost effective. The business model provides affordable broadband service choices to New Hampshire communities and aligns with all seven BTOP priorities, including the availability of a non-federal match. It also creates a public-private partnership and meets many of the goals of the State's broadband mission statement and broadband action plan.

This proposal will improve public safety and deliver an advanced education network for next generation Internet services and research. The network will reach more than 150 communities, including those in economically distressed areas, and serve seven community colleges and more than 900 anchor institutions, including 134 public safety entities, 197 hospitals and medical facilities, 178 educational institutions and 234 public libraries. The network will involve over 450 miles of newly constructed open access fiber optic cable and will leverage over 200 miles of existing dark fiber, providing middle mile capacity for use by competitive providers in all 10 counties. The NNHN proposal consolidates microwave antennas among several public safety agencies, freeing space on the towers for future wireless access points to serve end-users in rural areas. Finally, the NNHN proposal contains funding for a State Telecommunications Director position, which will coordinate and oversee the State's efforts to advance its broadband objectives.

Recommended Projects

In addition, we recommend the following projects that promote broadband demand and affordability, and address education, awareness, and telehealth for vulnerable populations.

Sustainable Broadband Adoption Project - Recommended

Arnett Development Group-Health and Welfare (EZ Grant ID #6720): This project will provide a comprehensive range of telehealth services to 5,000 clients of Northern New England's largest healthcare provider, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. It will also screen, train and employ 50 job-seekers in telehealth jobs via the Community College System.

WiValley, Inc (EZ Grant ID #5767): WiValley is proposing a fixed wireless accelerated broadband adoption program to reduce the upfront cost barrier to adopting fixed wireless broadband in a rural demographic area. Currently there is a standard \$400 up front activation fee that is charged to customers to connect to the wireless network as a typical installation. This project accelerates customer adoption in WiValley's planned service with or without an award from Rd 2 BIP Application (EZ Grant ID#5768).

Public Computer Center Project – Recommended

City of Manchester (EZ Grant ID#4467): This project provides free Internet access and training to the public using a combination of broadband technologies at the libraries and public Wi-Fi hotspots throughout the city. It includes a targeted initiative that supports training and access to vulnerable groups including the homeless, the unemployed, low-income residents, senior citizens, at-risk youth, students, learners of English as a second language, and the disabled.

Linked BIP Applications

The NNHN proposal is also linked to another recommended RUS/BIP Last Mile Remote Project submitted by WiValley Inc (EZ Grant ID#5768). The linked application will provide last mile remote support in the Southwestern corner of the State. We believe the WiValley proposal complements the NNHN application and will help to expand broadband capacity and availability to the greatest number of New Hampshire citizens.