Broadband Infrastructure Application
Submission to RUS (BIP) and NTIA (BTOP)

Submitted Date: 8/18/2009 1:53:59 PM	**Easygrants ID: 153**
Funding Opportunity: Broadband Initiatives Program and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program	**Applicant Organization:** Merit Network Inc.
Task: Submit Application - Infrastructure Programs	**Applicant Name:** Dr. Donald J Welch

Uploads

The following pages contain the following uploads provided by the applicant:

Upload Name
04) Q-20. Attachment B - Middle Mile Offerings
05) Q-21. Attachment C - Competitor Tables
06) Q-26. Cost per Household
07) Q-27. Affordability
08) Q-30. Network Diagram
09) Q-31. Attachment D - Engineer Certification*
10) Q-34. Attachment E - Build-Out Timeline
11) Q-37. Management Team Resumes
12) Q-39. Organization Chart
13) Q-40. Attachment F - Legal Opinion*
14) Q-41. Government and Other Key Partnerships

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15) Q-44. JOINT APPS ONLY: Additional Budget
16) Q-45. Attachment G - Detailed Project Cost
17) Q-47. Historical Financial Statements
18) Q-48. Attachment H - Subscriber Estimates
19) Q-49.Attachment I - Projects, Rates - Voice
20) Q-49.Attachment J - Projects, Rates - Video**
21) Q-50. Attachment K - Income Statement
22) Q-50. Attachment L - Balance Sheet
23) Q-50. Attachment M - Statement of Cash Flows
24) Q-50. Financial Assumptions
25) BTOP ONLY Authentication*
26) Pg-22. BTOP ONLY Certification Requirements*

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27) Pg-23. BTOP ONLY Att. N - Assur-Construction*
28) Pg-24. BTOP ONLY Attachment O - Lobbying*
29) Pg-25. BTOP ONLY Attachment P - Disclosure*
30) Pg-26. BTOP ONLY Attachment Q - Lobbying*
31) Pg-27. BIP ONLY Equal Opportunity*
32) Pg-28. BIP ONLY Architectural Barriers*
33) Pg-29. BIP ONLY Relocation and Real Property*
34) Pg-30. BIP ONLY Debarment and Suspension*
35) Pg-31. BIP ONLY Lobbying Certification*
43) Supplemental Information 1
44) Supplemental Information 2
45) Supplemental Information 3

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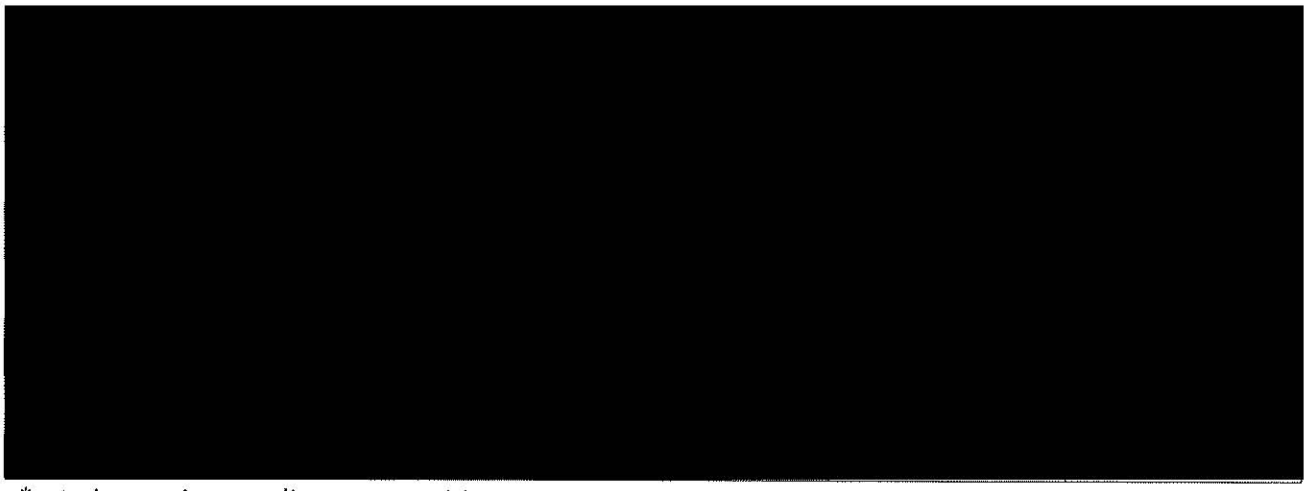
To preserve the integrity of the uploaded document, headers, footers and page numbers have not been added by the system

Attachment B(Q20) – Proposed Middle Mile Service Offerings

Please complete the table below describing the service offerings that will be available indicating the bandwidth packages, the distance band (length of the network section) or point-to-point (geographical end points) of the specific package, the minimum peak load bandwidth that is available on the route, and the monthly or yearly pricing for the services. The chart may be adapted to adequately describe the service offerings of the project as long as the information described is included.

Service Offering	Distance Band or Point to Point	Min. Peak Load Network Bandwidth Capacity (Mbps)	Month/Year Pricing ($)	Other
[redacted]				



*rate is not time or distance sensitive

The service offerings for the REACH-3MC project have been designed to meet a range of contemporary networking needs. Services will include the following, as listed in above and further described in the response to Question 29:

This suite of services will provide the ability for middle mile and last mile providers to make their own choices in service provisioning that best suit their network, capabilities, and long-term plans.

As part of the preparation of this application, Merit has identified anchor institutions and partnered with middle mile and last mile providers in each county that will be served by the new infrastructure, a first step toward ensuring wide local availability. As new infrastructure paths and services become available, Merit will broadly promote the availability to local organizations.

All connections are governed by Merit's Acceptable Use Policy, available at http://www.merit.edu/policies/acceptable_use.php. That policy describes acceptable use of Merit's network services and defines corrective measures in cases of abusive or illegal activities. Merit does not monitor or judge the content of information transmitted via its services.

ATTACHMENT C (Q21) – COMPETITOR TABLE – LAST MILE (N/A) SEE BELOW FOR MIDDLE MILE RESPONSE

Existing Last Mile Broadband Service Providers and Services Offered: Please complete a table describing the competing last mile providers' broadband service offerings being advertised in each proposed funded service area (BIP applicants should complete this table for each census designated community within the proposed funded service area) . For each competitor, explain the following: a) technology; b) service tiers; c) advertised speeds for residential and business; d) pricing. Include any other comments to explain your findings, if necessary.

	<Applicant Service Area Name>							
Service Area	Last Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Advertised Residential Offering		Advertised Business Offering		Other Comments
				Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	Downstream Speed (Mbps)	Price	
Service Area 1/ Census community 1	**Provider A**		[redacted]					
	Provider B							
Service Area 2/ Census community 2	**Provider A**							
	Provider B							

ATTACHMENT C (Q21) – COMPETITOR TABLE – MIDDLE MILE

Existing Middle Mile Broadband Service Providers and Services Offered: Please complete a table describing the competing middle mile providers' broadband service offerings being advertised in the last mile service areas associated with the proposed middle mile project. **For BIP**, please provide this information for each census designated community within each last mile service area. For each competitor, explain the following: a) technology; b) service tiers; c) point-to-point of the competitor's service offering; d) speed; and e) pricing. Include any other comments to explain your findings if necessary.

	REACH Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative						
Service Area	Middle Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Point-to-Point	Minimum Peak Load Network Bandwidth Capacity	Pricing	Other Comments
Western Corridor	**Provider A** [redacted]	[redacted]					
	Provider B [redacted]						
Central Corridor	**Provider A** [redacted]						
	Provider B [redacted]						

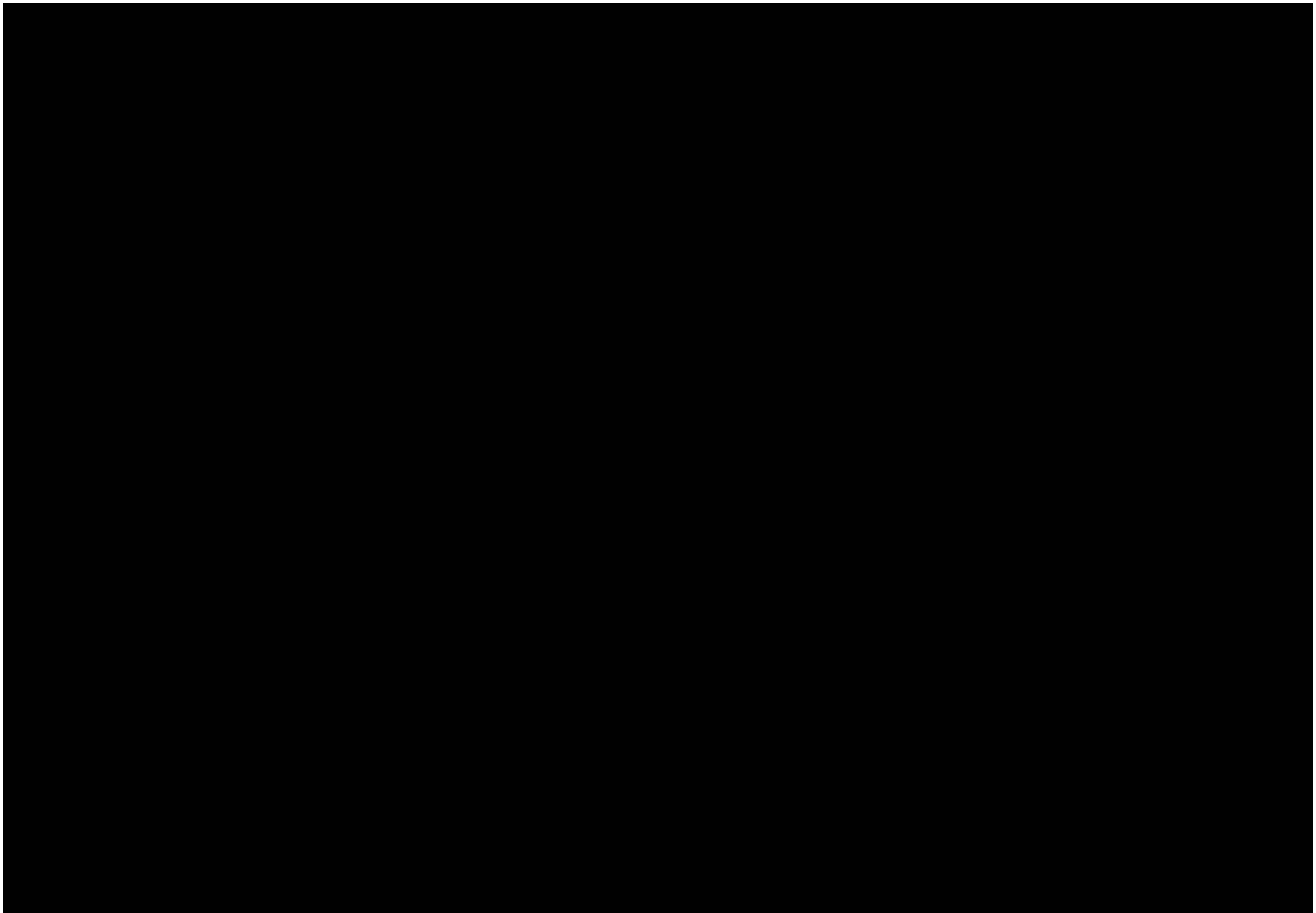
Service Area	Middle Mile Services Provider	Technology Platform	Service Tier	Point-to-Point	Minimum Peak Load Network Bandwidth Capacity	Pricing	Other Comments
Southern Corridor	**Provider A** [redacted]	[redacted]					
	Provider B [redacted]						
Eastern Corridor	**Provider A** [redacted]						
	Provider B [redacted]						

Q26. Cost Per Household

REACH-3MC is a middle mile project, and has thus not included supplemental documentation for this category.

Affordability in funded areas:

All support data was included in the Question 27 Affordability narrative. The services that Merit is offering as outlined in Attachment B – Proposed Middle Mile Service Offerings are currently not offered in the service area as Merit has defined. Therefore, the pricing was compared to adjacent areas as well as regional and national prices. In addition, the pricing was also compared with Attachment C – Competitor Table – Middle Mile.



REACH Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative

#30 Network Diagram

Drawing by P. Miller,
Merit Network,
8/4/2009

Western Tel-Com, Inc.

August 5, 2009

Bob Stovall
VP of Network Operations & Engineering
Merit Network, Inc.

Bob,

Western Tel-Com's team has reviewed Merit's proposed network plan, to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Commerce BIP and BTOP program, and determined that your plan is feasible, cost effective and addresses future considerations.

Somayajulu P. Yedavally, Professional Engineer, Professional Surveyor reviewed the fiber routes and the implementation schedules. Kevin McLaughlin, Professional Engineer, BICSI RCDD reviewed the network diagram and network electronics.

Somayajulu's review of the fiber routes determined that they were feasible and could be built within the schedule Merit is proposing. The routes may need to be altered slightly when the detailed engineering and permitting take place. These would be caused by unforeseen conditions in the route or local municipality's codes and requirements. The schedules could be effecting negatively mainly by two factors. First would be pole permitting and pole make-ready, these items are controlled by power companies. Second would be the weather, too much frost or snow could cause significant delays during the winter months. The proposed schedule has allotted extra time for these possible problems and scheduled around the winter months as much as possible. If these factors should exceed the schedules allotted time then there is room to add additional construction crews to make up the exceeded time.

Kevin McLaughlin's review of the network concluded that the proposed system has future expansion ability, low cost of operation and reduced energy consumption. The proposed system is feasible with the planned equipment and its deployment. The members of the project team have the ability to design, furnish and install the network.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 616-393-0138.

Sincerely,

Kurt Freidreichsen

Kurt Friedriechsen, RCDD
President
Western Tel-Com Inc.
Phone: 616-393-0138

Network Design and Implementation Plan Certification (to be complete for projects requesting more than $1 million in federal assistance)

U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Commerce
BIP and BTOP Program

We the undersigned, certify that the proposed broadband system will work as described in the System Design and Network Diagram sections, and can deliver the proposed services outlined in the Service Offerings Section. Moreover, the system, as designed, can meet the proposed build-out timeframe based on the resources designated in Project Viability Section, and will be substantially complete in two years, and complete within three years.

5 Aug 09
(Date)

(Authorized Representative's Signature)

Donald J Wright
Name:

President & CEO
Title:

08-05-2009
(Date)

Somayajulu P. Yedavally
(Certifying Engineer's Signature)

Somayajulu P. Yedavally
Name:

Professional Engineer
Title:

STATE OF MICHIGAN
LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
SOMAYAJULU P. YEDAVALLY
ENGINEER
No. 22824

Network Design and Implementation Plan Certification (to be complete for projects requesting more than $1 million in federal assistance)

U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Commerce
BIP and BTOP Program

We the undersigned, certify that the proposed broadband system will work as described in the System Design and Network Diagram sections, and can deliver the proposed services outlined in the Service Offerings Section. Moreover, the system, as designed, can meet the proposed build-out timeframe based on the resources designated in Project Viability Section, and will be substantially complete in two years, and complete within three years.

5 Aug 09
(Date)

Donald J Weeth
(Authorized Representative's Signature)

DONALD J WEEKS
Name:

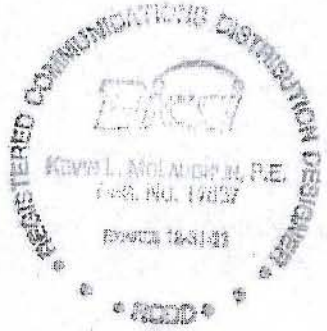
PRESIDENT & CEO
Title:

8/05/2009
(Date)

(Certifying Engineer's Signature)

Kevin McLaughlin, P.E. RCDD
Name:

Professional Engineer
Title:



ATTACHMENT E(Q34) – PROJECT PLAN (KEY PHASES AND MILESTONES TO DEMONSTRATE DEGREE OF COMPLETION)

- Use the following table to list the major network build-out phases and milestones that can demonstrate that your entire project will be substantially complete by the end of Year 2 and fully complete by the end of Year 3. This is to be done at the aggregate level (combining all proposed funded service areas.)
- Indicate how the milestones listed below will demonstrate these completion objectives. The applicant should consider such project areas as: a) network design; b) securing all relevant licenses and agreements; c) site preparation; d) equipment procurement; e) inside plant deployment; f) outside plant deployment; g) equipment deployment; h) network testing; i) network complete and operational. The applicant may provide any other milestones that it believes showcase progress.
- Project inception (Year 0) starts at the date when the applicant receives notice that the project has been approved for funding.
- In the table, provide any information (e.g., facts, analysis) to: a) demonstrate the reasonableness of these milestones; b) substantiate the ability to reach the milestones by the quarters indicated.
- On a separate sheet, describe the key challenges, if any, to a timely completion of the project, including any applicable mitigation plans.

Time Period	Qtr	List All Relevant Milestones	Support for Reasonableness/Data Points
Year 0	-	• Equipment RFP • Order required fiber cable • Fiber installation crew assignments • Final Network Design	• Negotiate best pricing for equipment. • Large fiber order for better discount. • Final network design complete
Year 1	Qtr. 1	• Engineering, surveying and permitting for segment group 1. Pellston to Mackinaw City, Traverse City to Kalkaska, Benton Harbor to Berrien Springs, Petoskey to Pellston, Kalkaska to Mancelona, Whitehall to Pentwater, Berrien Springs to Three Rivers, [redacted] Midland to Bay City, Coldwater to Hillsdale, Boyne City to Petoskey, Pentwater to Ludington, Mancelona to East Jordan, Standish to Pinconning, Pinconning to Midland, Three Rivers to Coldwater, Ludington to Scottsville, East Jordan to Boyne City, laterals to [redacted]	• First steps for each segment as defined by construction contractor. • Equipment order schedule driven by manufacturer delivery times.

		[redacted] • Order optical and network equipment for segment group 1. • Midland Central Office, Bay City, Pinconning, Benton Harbor, Berrien Springs, Three Rivers, Coldwater , Traverse City, Mancelona, Petoskey, Mackinaw City	
	Qtr. 2	• Engineering, surveying and permitting for segment group 2. • Twinning to [redacted] Laterals to [redacted] • Make ready completion fiber build to start for segment group 1. • Fiber completions for segment group 1 • Order optical and network equipment for segment group 2.	• First steps for each segment as defined by construction contractor. • Average of 80 days to complete permitting process. • Segment testing and equipment install. • Equipment order schedule driven by manufacturer delivery times.
	Qtr. 3	• Engineering, surveying and permitting for segment group 3. Grand Haven to Muskegon, Zeeland to Grand Haven, laterals to [redacted] • Make ready completed build to start for segment group 2. • Fiber completions for segment group 2. • Order optical and network equipment for segment group 3. • Sites and Segments activated for service for segment group 1.	• First steps for each segment as defined by construction contractor. • Average of 80 days to complete permitting process. • Segment testing and equipment install. • Equipment order schedule driven by manufacturer delivery times. • Testing complete, ready for service.
	Qtr. 4	• Engineering, surveying and permitting for segment group 4. South Haven to Zeeland, Benton Harbor to South Haven, Hillsdale to Hudson, Hudson to Adrian, Adrian to Blissfield, Blissfield to Monroe, Gladwin to Mt. Pleasant, East Jordan to Charlevoix West Spur, Boyne City to Charlevoix East Spur, Grayling to Gladwin, Gaylord to Grayling laterals [redacted]	• First steps for each segment as defined by construction contractor. • Average of 80 days to complete permitting process. • Segment testing and equipment install. • Equipment order schedule driven by manufacturer delivery times. • Testing complete, ready for service.

		[redacted] • Make ready completed build to be started for segment group 3. • Fiber Completions for segment group 3. • Order optical and network equipment for segment group 4. • Segments and sites activated for service segment group 2.	
Year 2	Qtr. 1	• Engineering, surveying and permitting for segment group 5. Beulah to Traverse City, Hillman to Gaylord, Manistee to Beulah, [redacted] Scottsville to Manistee, laterals to [redacted] • Make ready is completed build to be started for segment group 4. • Fiber Completions for segment group 4. • Order optical and network equipment for segment group 5. • Segments and sites activated for service segment group 3.	• First steps for each segment as defined by construction contractor. • Average of 80 days to complete permitting process. • Segment testing and equipment install. • Equipment order schedule driven by manufacturer delivery times. • Testing complete, ready for service.
	Qtr. 2	• Engineering, surveying and permitting for segment group 6. [redacted] • Make Ready is completed build to be started for segment group 5. • Fiber Completions for segment group 5. • Order optical and network equipment for segment group 6. • Segments and sites activated for service segment group 4.	• First steps for each segment as defined by construction contractor. • Average of 80 days to complete permitting process. • Segment testing and equipment install. • Equipment order schedule driven by manufacturer delivery times. • Testing complete, ready for service.
	Qtr. 3	• Make Ready is completed build to be started for segment group 6. • Fiber Completions for segment group 6. • Segments and sites activated for service segment group 5.	• Average of 80 days to complete permitting process. • Segment testing and equipment install. • Testing complete, ready for service.
	Qtr. 4	• Segments and sites activated for service segment group 6.	• Testing complete, ready for service.
Year 3	Qtr. 1	• .	• .
	Qtr. 2	• .	• .
	Qtr. 3	• .	• .
	Qtr. 4	• .	• .

ATTACHMENT E (CONTINUED) – BUILD-OUT TIMELINE

Complete the following schedule for each proposed funded service area (or, if a middle mile project, for each last mile service area) to indicate the planned build-out in terms of: 1) the requested infrastructure funds; and 2) the entities passed. Entities passed include households, businesses, and "strategic institutions" comprised of critical community facilities, community anchor institutions, and public safety entities. In addition, please complete a separate schedule that aggregates all projected broadband subscribers within the proposed funded service area (or if a middle mile project, for each last mile service area). For BIP only, please include this information for the non-funded service areas as well.

Service Area REACH-3MC	**REACH Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative**																			
		YEAR 1				**YEAR 2**				**YEAR 3**				**YEAR 4**				**YEAR 5**			
	YEAR 0	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4
Infrastructure Funds	122K	8.9M	5.9M	4.8M	9M	6M	1.19M	1.9M	1.9M	1M	358K	363K	178K								
Infrastructure Funds Advanced (estimate)	97.6K	7.12M	5.6M	3.84M	7.2M	4.72M	960K	1.52M	1.52M	800K	230K	290K	204K								
Percentage of Total Funds	.29%	21.4%	14.2%	11.5%	21.6%	14.4%	2.9%	4.6%	4.6%	2.4%	.86%	.87%	.43%								
Entities Passed & %		0	0	286k	269k	223k	0	35k	103k	20k											
&%		0	0	30.4%	28.6%	23.7%	0	3.7%	10.9%	2%											
Households		0	0	270k	258k	203k	0	34k	99k	20k											
Percentage of Total Households		0	0	31.3%	29.8%	23.5%	0%	3.9%	11.5%	2.3%											
Businesses		0	0	16.5k	11.8k	11.5k	0	1.5k	3.7k	771											
Percentage of Total Businesses		0	0	36%	26%	25%	0	3%	8%	2%											
Strategic Institutions (Comm. Anchor, Public Safety, etc)		0	0	129	123	105	0	20	43	10											
Percentage of Total Institutions		0	0	30%	29%	24%	0	5%	10%	2%											

SEE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION 3 FOR DETAILED AND LAST MILE INFORMATION.

KEY CHALLENGES

- Weather in the Michigan region restricts underground construction from approximately November to April in the northern areas and January to March in the southern areas. Mitigation is to plan underground work outside these months.
- Variations in geography can restrict construction. Swamps, large rocks, etc may prevent construction on the desired path. Mitigation is to reroute around the obstacle.
- Permit granting on aerial right of way can be highly variable in terms of time and costs. Experience has shown that problematic aerial paths (large amounts of make ready required) are best bypassed by rerouting on alternate roadways or going underground. A balance between high make ready costs and the increased cost of going underground needs to be maintained.
- Fiber availability varies with manufacturer's production schedule. Order of work can be altered to continue building infrastructure and install fiber at a later time. This may increase cost due to dispatching construction crews multiple times.
- In order to ensure projects move forward without delay, the State of Michigan is developing a multi-agency coordinating committee comprised of management level staff from each of the agencies involved in the permitting or approval process. The committee will be responsible for expediting and/or resolving any issues that develop with regard to broadband project permitting. In addition, in order to minimize the time associated with the review and approval process for projects related to this program, the group has developed a streamlined process for application identification, submittal and processing. Applicants awarded funds for broadband infrastructure projects will be notified by letter of the expedited process and contact information for
the committee.

Q-37: Management Team Resumes

The management and project team members whose resumes are provided on the following pages comprise an experienced and highly capable group with the skills necessary to accomplish the goals of the project. Together the team has over 75 working years of experience at Merit and over 225 working years of professional experience, most in networking organizations. Some recent accomplishments of Merit's management team include:

Transition to Merit-owned fiber backbone: 2004-present

- Have recognized significant financial savings and bandwidth increases by continuously replacing leased links with owned fiber
- Currently manage 1600 miles of fiber links

10G backbone router upgrade: 2008-2009

- Refreshes backbone equipment on regular upgrade schedule
- Implemented Bidirectional Forwarding Detection (BFD) Protocol throughout backbone to improve fault detection

Merit Blue Line Fiber build: 2005-2009

- Over 500 miles on 17-segment fiber backbone
- Owned fiber, operated and managed by Merit
- Connects Merit's governing member institutions in the Lower Peninsula
- Awarded and have since repaid a $4,204,000 loan by the Michigan Strategic Fund

Hillsdale and Alpena Fiber Network Projects: 2005-2008

- Merit management and Member Relations staff worked closely with community organizations to plan and deploy fiber networks in these two regions
- Employed strategies to help organizations collaborate toward shared networks of mutual benefit

Wireless Link across Canada-U.S. border: 2008

- Established link across border at Sault Ste. Marie, MI, between Merit and ORION, the optical network in Ontario
- Provided backup path useful to both Merit and ORION

Fiber-optic link established to Toledo, OH: 2008

- Fiber link established to OSCnet, Ohio's research and education network
- Provides Merit with second link to Internet2 via connection
- Provides OSCnet with link from Toledo to Chicago

Upper Peninsula Fiber builds: 2007

- Cooperative partnership with providers in Upper Peninsula to connect Merit's governing Member universities in the U.P.
- Includes Merit's first fiber link over the Mackinac Bridge, providing both path redundancy and shorter round-trip distances

Donald J. Welch, President and CEO, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI 2006-Present

- President and Chief Executive Officer 2006-Present
- Director, Michigan Information Technology Center 2006-Present
- Advisory Council Member, Internet2 External Relations Council 2009-Present

H-E-B; San Antonio, TX 2004-2006

- Director, Enterprise Technology (CTO) and Merchandising Applications 2006

U.S. Army; West Point 1998-2004

- Chief Information Officer, Academic Division 2000-2004
- Director, Information Technology Teaching Program 1999-2000
- Director, Computer Support and Software Engineering Professor 1998-1999
- Graduate Fellowship, University of Maryland 1995-1998

U.S. Army; Ft. Bragg 1993-1995

- Chief, Software Engineering, Delta Force

U.S. Army 1979-1991

- Various leadership roles in infantry, human resources, and information technology

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Don Welch is the President and CEO of Merit Network, Inc. where he is responsible for strategically leading Merit to serve a large community with advanced network-based services. Under Don's leadership, Merit has completed two major, successful fiber builds: the Blue Line fiber build, a 500-mile link that connects many points in Michigan's Lower Peninsula; and a collaborative project in which Merit partnered with OARNET in Ohio to construct fiber from Michigan to Toledo. He also led Merit through the successful purchase of fiber in the Upper Peninsula. Don will have executive authority for Merit's activities under this project.

Prior to his arrival at Merit, Don was the Director of Enterprise Technology (CTO) and Merchandising Applications at H-E-B. While there, Don was responsible for delivering all merchandising projects ($7MM per year), mapping the application strategy to the business strategy, and bringing a diverse internal and external team of business analysts, project managers, and technical staff together to deliver quality solutions to H-E-B's merchants.

Before joining H-E-B in 2004, Don served in the Army for 25 years and attained the rank of Colonel. In his last position at West Point, he was the Chief Information Officer for the Academic Division, where he developed and implemented the vision for information technology at West Point. While he was CIO, Don led IT operations, infrastructure, and application development, as well as managing over $19 million in IT assets. During his career, Don has taught project management and lead major projects for H-E-B, West Point, and Delta Force.

Robert E. Stovall, Vice President of Network Operations and Engineering, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI 1989-Present

- Vice President of Network Operations and Engineering 2008-Present
- Network Operations and Engineering Manager 2006-2008
- Network Operations and Engineering Supervisor 1996-2006
- Electronic Technician 1989-1996

Bob Stovall, Vice President of Network Operations and Engineering at Merit Network, has been with Merit for over 20 years and has an extensive background in network engineering. Under this project, Bob will have executive responsibility for the design, engineering and operations of the fiber network.

Currently, Bob manages operations and provides strategic leadership for Merit's Operations, Engineering, and Network Operations Center departments. Bob has extensive experience in leading teams; in his position as a Network and Operations Engineering Manager, he was responsible for the leadership, professional development, and direct supervision of 11 network engineers. While serving as Network and Operations Engineering Supervisor, Bob managed the installation of network equipment for a statewide network, coordinated internal and external training for staff throughout the organization, and was responsible for the leadership and organization of 10 network engineers.

Bob has played a vital role in many successful fiber projects throughout his tenure at Merit. In the MiLR project, which involved connecting a fiber ring throughout Michigan and into Illinois, he led a team that was responsible for implementing and installing hardware that was crucial for fiber operation. Bob's team also provided network engineering support for the Blue Line fiber build, which is a 500-mile link that connects many points in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. His team also played a major role in the successful Upper Peninsula fiber project by installing hardware and helping provide connectivity to many locations in the Upper Peninsula. Bob has managed smaller fiber builds as well, with the most recent project being the fiber build from Hillsdale to Jackson.

Bob has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Cleary University and an Associate's Degree in Electronic Engineering Technology from Jackson Community College.

Elwood J. Downing, Vice President, Member Relations, Communications, & Professional Learning, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI 1995-Present

- Vice President, Member Relations, Communications, & Professional Learning 2007-Present
- Manager, Technology Customer Relations (Member Services) 1999-2007
- Internet Consultant 1996-1999
- Computer Systems Consultant III 1995-1996

Ross Learning, Inc; Southfield, MI 1996-2002

- Adjunct Instructor, Corporate Services Division

Meijer, Inc; Grand Rapids, MI 1988-1995

- Service Specialist, including Cash Office 1994-1995
- Manager, Guest Service, including Cash Office 1993-1994
- Manager, Service Area, including Cash Office 1992-1993
- Manager, Information Systems 1989-1992
- Systems Monitor 1988-1989

Elwood Downing is the Vice President of Member Relations for Merit Network, Inc., Michigan's high-speed research and education network. While at Merit, Elwood has led the company through multiple fiber building and education projects. He assumed a leadership role in the CoNDUIT project, where Merit provided connectivity and educational resources to manufacturing organizations and community colleges around Michigan from 1995-1997. Elwood was also largely responsible for the success of the Alpena Fiber Consortium and Hillsdale Community Fiber Project, both of which added new fiber throughout Michigan. Elwood will have chief responsibility for customer care, marketing, pricing, outreach, and education related to this project.

Beyond his involvement in fiber projects at Merit, Elwood has reorganized the Customer Service Department to provide a customer service-engineering model that is based on a "team job share" concept. This model has improved customer outreach, lowered customer churn, and improved morale. He also has analyzed and implemented an electronic workflow process of Merit's order processing and invoicing system. This new system has streamlined processes that provide Consultant staff with tools to effectively and efficiently support Merit's customers. In addition, the system provides management with real-time earned and billed revenue reporting.

At Meijer, Inc., Elwood opened eleven new stores as Systems Information Manager. He also managed a total of 300 people and coordinated the collaboration of six departments, which included: Information Systems, Cash Office, Gas Station, Service Desk, Cashiers, and Utility Workers.

Robert L. Duncan, Director, Backbone Network Engineering, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI 2007-Present
- Director, Backbone Network Engineering

Vision IT, Consultant to General Motors Acceptance Corporation 2004-2007
- Global Technology Architect

Nortel Networks; Ann Arbor, MI 1977-2003
- Senior Advisor, Infrastructure Strategy and Architecture 1999-2003
- Senior Manager, Multi-Media Carrier Services 1998-1999
- Senior Manager, Enterprise Strategy and Architecture 1994-1998
- Manager Technical Services, Global Network Computing 1993-1994
- Manager Technical Services, Network Services 1989-1993
- Supervisor Technical Services, Network Services 1986-1989
- Supervisor Technical Services, Operating Systems 1985-1986
- Technical Services Senior Systems Programmer 1980-1985
- R & D Group Leader, Systems Languages 1977-1980

Robert has served for the last three years as a Director at Merit, where he has managed the backbone network engineering group responsible for network architecture, economic analysis, and performance analysis and reporting. In this position, Robert is responsible for managing network evolution with a tactical goal of replacing leased circuits with dark fiber assets. He also develops strategic plans for three to five year backbone network growth, negotiates private and commercial network peering and interconnections with partner networks, and represents Merit in national and international networking forums. Under this project, Robert will have responsibility for the engineering aspects of the fiber builds, integration of new fiber with Merit's existing network assets, negotiation for acquisitions, and mapping and tool development.

While at Vision IT, Robert served as a Global Technology Architect where he developed Infrastructure Architecture to integrate Business Systems applications and Network/Computing resources in a fully outsourced environment. During this time, Robert implemented SSL/IPSEC VPN strategy for Joint Venture, Partner, and Employee remote access, and developed MPLS strategy to replace ATM and Frame Relay backbone network for global deployment. As a Senior Advisor for Infrastructure Strategy and Architecture at Nortel Networks, Robert directed all planning, design, product selection and final development of a Business Continuity Plan for the corporate desktop infrastructure. He also wrote UNIX/LINUX and Network corporate security standards documents.

Karen Ann Smith, Director of Finance and Administration, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI 2000-Present
- Director of Finance and Administration

University of Michigan Information Technology Central Services, Ann Arbor, MI 1996-2000
- Senior Financial Analyst, 1998-2000
- Accountant / Senior Accountant, 1996-1998

Grancare, Inc.-Michigan Service Center, Ann Arbor, MI 1993-1995
- Accounts Payable / Cash Manager

Veterans Administration Medical Center, Ann Arbor, MI 1983-1990
- Technician and Procurement Manager

Karen Smith is the Director of Finance and Aministration for Merit Network, Inc. In that role she serves as financial and administration controller, with responsibilities that include financial administration of service product revenue and expense, oversight of grant submissions, and support for research and development financial schedules and analysis. She would play a major role in this project by providing financial oversight, budget administration, project planning, contract administration, and tax reporting.

Her role at Merit includes significant grant administration and project budgeting, comprising $17M in grant-funded and non-grant project revenue. She supervises the financial work of seven administration staff and multiple interns and manages human resource and facilities issues for 65 staff. Karen assists, reviews, and approves all financial analysis and budgeting; evaluates company risk issues and determine insurance requirements; is responsible for the design, development and implementation of financial tools; and approves final monthly and annual financial statements. She establishes year-end audit methodology, standardizes audit documentation and approves the final release of statements by audit firm. She implements and monitors internal financial and operational controls through consultation with Merit's audit firm; prepares and submits non-profit IRS documentation and forms 990/990-T; consults with corporate lawyers as required; and serves as a member of Merit Board's budget sub-committee.

Previous professional roles have included significant responsibility for budgeting, financial statements, taxation and cash management. Karen holds a B.B.A. in Accounting from Eastern Michigan University

Peter Miller, Director of Network Operations, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI — 2008-Present
- Director of Network Operations

Ford Motor Company; Dearborn, MI — 1996-2008
- Senior Network Engineering Supervisor 2005-2008
- Network Engineer 2002-2005
- Network Planner 2000-2002
- Facilities Analyst 1996-2000

Ameritech; Dearborn, MI — 1994-1996
- Network Technician

United States Army — 1989-1994
- Military Police Officer

As the Director of Network Operations at Merit Network, Peter Miller is responsible for the operations, upgrades, and maintenance of the Merit network infrastructure. Under this project, Peter will directly manage the team responsible for the build coordination, hardware implementation, and operations of the fiber network.

Peter manages the Network Operations Center at Merit, which provides high-level support for the state research and education network. Beyond his experience in tactical and strategic network planning at Merit, Peter serves as a liaison with the Merit Member community, connecting people, processes, and technology.

While at Ford, Peter managed numerous successful network infrastructure and implementation projects. As a Senior Network Engineering Supervisor, he led a group that was responsible for designing, planning, and managing the implementation of all network infrastructure changes in the Western Hemisphere. Peter also managed a cross-functional engineering team in the implementation of the North American IP Tel and was responsible for the management of IT infrastructure changes to support numerous concurrent New Model Program launches. While he was serving as a Network Engineer, Peter was responsible for the overall design and implementation of converged wireless data & voice networks. He also installed, configured, and supported LAN/WAN technologies utilizing DNS and IP networks, conducted in-house training for global operational support of WLAN infrastructure, and designed and successfully launched a WVoIP telephony pilot on a 802.1 (x) infrastructure.

Aside from his professional accomplishments, Peter has extensive knowledge in S-Ox related issues, contract negotiation, PMBOK, and CMMI. He is certified in Six Sigma and ICND, and studied Post-graduate IT Project Management at George Washington University.

John Labbe, Manager, Network Operations Center, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI — 2007-Present
- Manager, Network Operations Center

MCI, Verizon — 2004-2006
- Postmortem & Contract SLA Compliance Liaison

UUNet, WorldCom, MCI — 1997-2004
- Manager, Strategic Accounts Service Center

Advanced Network & Services — 1992-1997
- Manager, Network Operations Center

University of Michigan/Merit — 1982-1991
- Assistant Manager, Network Operations Center 1989-1991
- Various Customer Service and Operations Positions 1982-1989

John Labbe is a highly skilled network technician and manager with over 25 years of technical networking/Internet experience. As the Manager of the Network Operations Center at Merit, John is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the department. John also provides strategic and tactical direction for the group and leads teams to ensure a high level of Member service. Merit's NOC will be instrumental in the operational effectiveness of the services delivered under this project. The NOC will monitor all network devices, troubleshoot issues reported by automated processes and customers, track issues until resolution, and provide monthly status reports. NOC staff will work with operational and engineering teams to develop new tools that will continuously improve workflows and network performance.

While serving as a Postmortem & Contract SLA Compliance Liaison for MCI/Verizon, John analyzed service level agreement and contract compliance for high revenue customers. He also performed postmortem analysis and made recommendations to management for internal procedure changes. John had managerial duties in this position as well; he led weekly operational meetings between a wide variety of support teams to address AOL reported problems and led meetings with Telco vendors to ensure that the service model enabled successful support of AOL.

In his position as a Manager for the Strategic Accounts Service Center at UUNet/WorldCom/MCI, John designed and implemented a high-level support center for strategic customers that had unique service requirements. This support center served large customers, including America Online, Microsoft Network, Reuters, and Standard & Poor's.

Steven E. Weiland, Network Field and Provisioning Engineer, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network, Inc; Ann Arbor, MI 1994-Present

- Network Field and Provisioning Engineer

The Newman Holding Company; Dexter, MI 1985-1994

- Senior Technician

Steven Weiland is a highly experienced computer and network hardware engineer who has been a network technician for over 20 years. As a Network Field and Provisioning Engineer at Merit, Steven coordinates complex fiber builds with multiple parties, including contractors, utilities, and customers. He is responsible for testing and certifying fiber, and also maintaining a database with all pre and post-install circuit, site, contact, and equipment information. He will be a key contributor to this project, providing coordination of the fiber builds and certifications.

Before his position with Merit, Steven served as a Senior Technician for The Newman Holding Company, where his duties included testing, troubleshooting, configuring, and repairing all types of DEC printers, terminals, small systems, and personal computers. He worked with a wide range of VAX systems, DEC systems, DEC stations, and some larger 6000 systems. Steven also tested various types of LAN and WAN communication servers, bridges, routers, and repeaters.

Steven earned an Associate's Degree in Digital Equipment Technology from Washtenaw Community College and has received additional training in Cisco technologies and fiber-optic products.

Ann E. O'Beay, Director of Grants and Development, Merit Network

Experience

Merit Network; Related Corporate and Project Management Positions 2000-Present

- Grants and Development, Sales and Marketing Management; Leadership and Organizational Development; Strategic Planning; International Business Development; Telecommunication Project Management, Internet History Archive Advisory Council

Internet2; Director of Corporate Relations 1997-2000

- Responsible for the development and introduction of Internet2's Corporate Relations Program and engaging Government, Education and Research Entities in collaboration

Vice President/Regional Manager-Human Resources 1994-1996

- Vice President for Fortune 500 Human Resources/Services Company in operations

MCI; National Account Manager 1989-1994

- MCI's "Capture Manager" for MCI's successful vBNS (very high speed Backbone Network Service) proposal to the National Science Foundation
- Project Manager for MCI's engagement with the National Foundation Network (NSFNET)
- MCI's representative to (then) Educom; CAUSE; North American Network Operation Group (NANOG); Internet Society, and other industry forums
- MCI's liaison to Merit Network, Inc. in matters related to NSFNET

ITEK Graphix (Division of Litton Industries); Regional Manager 1983-1989

- Responsible for National Programs related to Composition Systems equipment

AT&T; Industry Manager and Certified Industry Consultant in Education 1978-1983

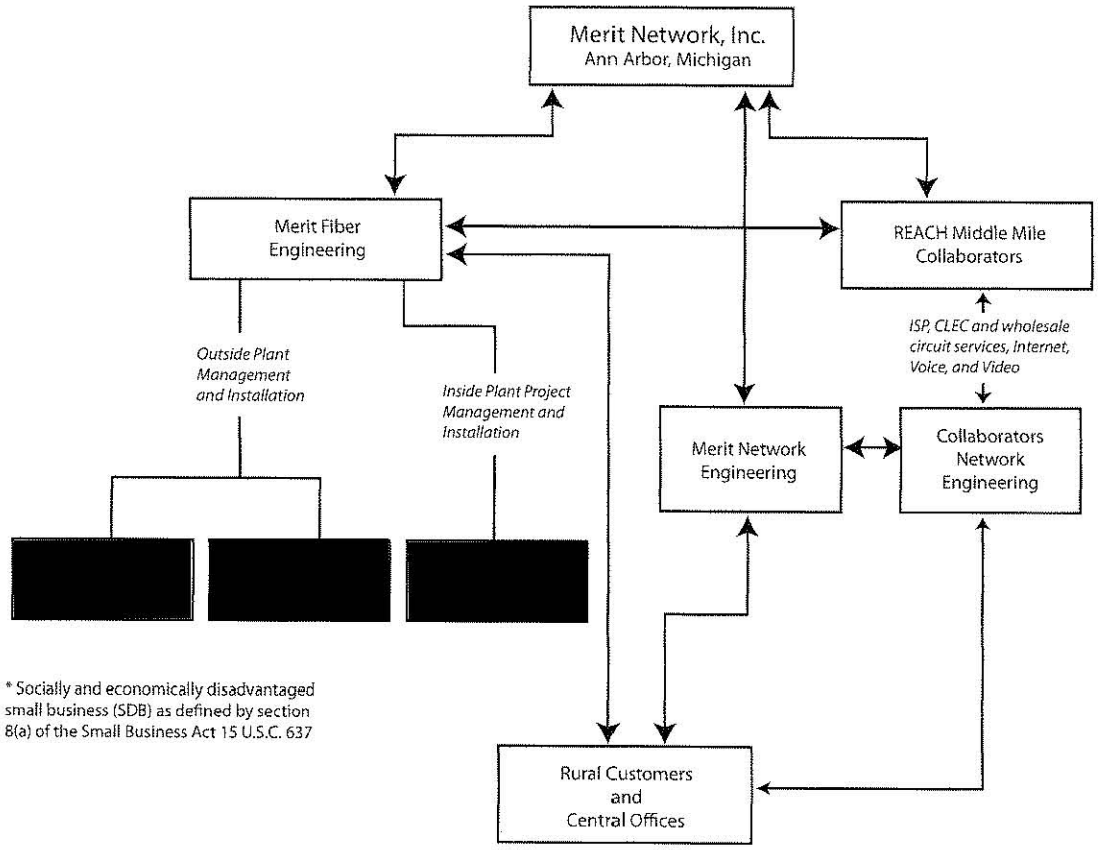
- Responsible for Government, Education and Medical Markets in Michigan
- Manager of Account Executive Teams

Ann O'Beay has over 20 years' experience in Research and Education networking and telecommunications. She provides strategic planning, facilitation, development, and program management services in nonprofit and commercial sectors. She serves on the Advisory Committee for the Internet History Archive and is a co-developer of the Internet Legacy Institute concept. Ann is a consultant to Merit Network, Inc. in grants and development.

Ann was the Director of Corporate Relations for Internet2 from 1997 to 2000, and led MCI's efforts with the National Science Foundation's NSFNET and vBNS initiatives. She has been a corporate liaison to EDUCAUSE / Net@EDU and other key organizations. She holds Masters and Bachelor's degrees from Eastern Michigan University and completed a year of post graduate study in Education at Reading University, Reading, England as a Rotary Foundation Scholar.

Merit Network

Parent/Subsidiary Organizational Chart and Services



REACH Middle Mile Collaborators

LYNX Network Group, LLC: Operates as a key niche provider of wholesale intrastate data services to major wireless and wireline (fiber based) carriers, with a specific focus on underserved and unserved market segments.

ACD.net: Independent Phone and Internet Provider with a 100% MPLS network.

Iserv: An independent, state-of-the art, full-service Internet, data, and voice connectivity provider offering a diverse selection of products and services to business and residential customers in the Midwest.

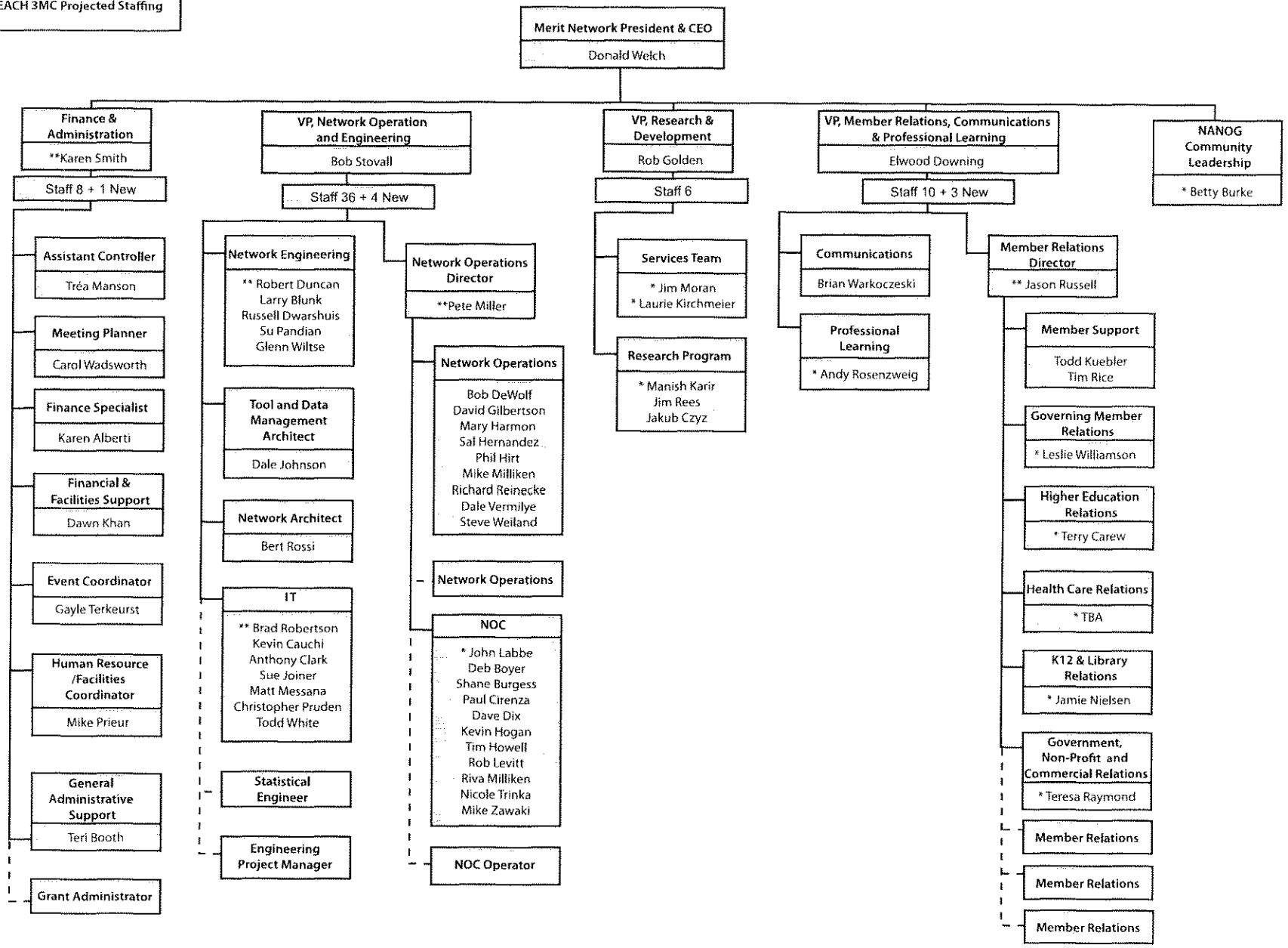
TC3Net: Independent phone and internet services provider.

[redacted]

Merit Network Organizational Chart

Q39 Organization Chart

Key:
** Director
* Manager
– – – REACH 3MC Projected Staffing



THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AND GENERAL COUNSEL

Legal Opinion

August 4, 2009

Administrator
Rural Utilities Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C. 20250-1500

Assistant Secretary
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Re: REACH Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative – BIP and BTOP Application

Dear Sir:

We are special counsel for Merit Network, Inc., (the "Applicant.") In such capacity, we acted as counsel to the Applicant in connection with its ability to apply to the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program and in the review of the grant agreement, as referenced in the Notice of Funds Availability.

We are of the opinion that:

(a) the Applicant is a duly organized and existing non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Michigan and has been determined by the Internal Revenue Service as exempt from federal income tax under IRC 501(c)(3); and

(b) the Applicant has corporate power: (1) to execute and deliver the grant agreement, loan agreement, or loan/grant combination agreement; and (2) to perform all acts required to be done by it under said agreement; and

(c) no legal proceedings have been instituted or are pending against the Applicant, the outcome of which would adversely affect the Applicant's ability to perform the duties under the grant, loan, or loan/grant agreement, or adversely affect the security to be pledged under the loan agreement, and there are no judgments against the Applicant and no liens against any of the personal property of the Applicant, which would adversely affect the security to be pledged under the grant, loan, or loan/grant agreement; and

(d) the applicant has the power to own its property and carry out its business as now conducted.

Very truly yours,

Thomas J. Blessing
Assistant General Counsel

CENTRAL CAMPUS LEGAL OFFICE
The University of Michigan
5010 Fleming Admin. Bldg.
503 Thompson Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1340
Phone: (734) 764-0304
Facsimile: (734) 763-5648

DEVELOPMENT LEGAL OFFICE
The University of Michigan
9000 Wolverine Tower
3003 South State Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1288
Phone: (734) 647-6095
Facsimile: (734) 647-6100

HEALTH SYSTEM LEGAL OFFICE
The University of Michigan
Suite 3B04 NIB
300 North Ingalls, SPC 5476
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-5476
Phone: (734) 764-2178
Facsimile: (734) 647-2781

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER
The University of Michigan
Second Floor
1214 S. University Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2592
Phone: (734) 763-0614
Facsimile: (734) 998-9630

Attachment for:
Q-41: Government and Other Key Partnerships

Summary page **1**

Memoranda of Understanding with REACH-3MC Subrecipients **2-14**

- LYNX
- Iserv
- TC3Net
- ACD.net

Additional Key Partnerships **15-18**

- Allband Communications Cooperative
- Boardman River Communications
- [redacted]

Letters from State and National Organizations **19-22**

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Subrecipient Last Mile Letters of Support **86-93**

Financial Proposal, [redacted] **94-96**

Memoranda of Understanding with REACH-3MC Sub-Recipients

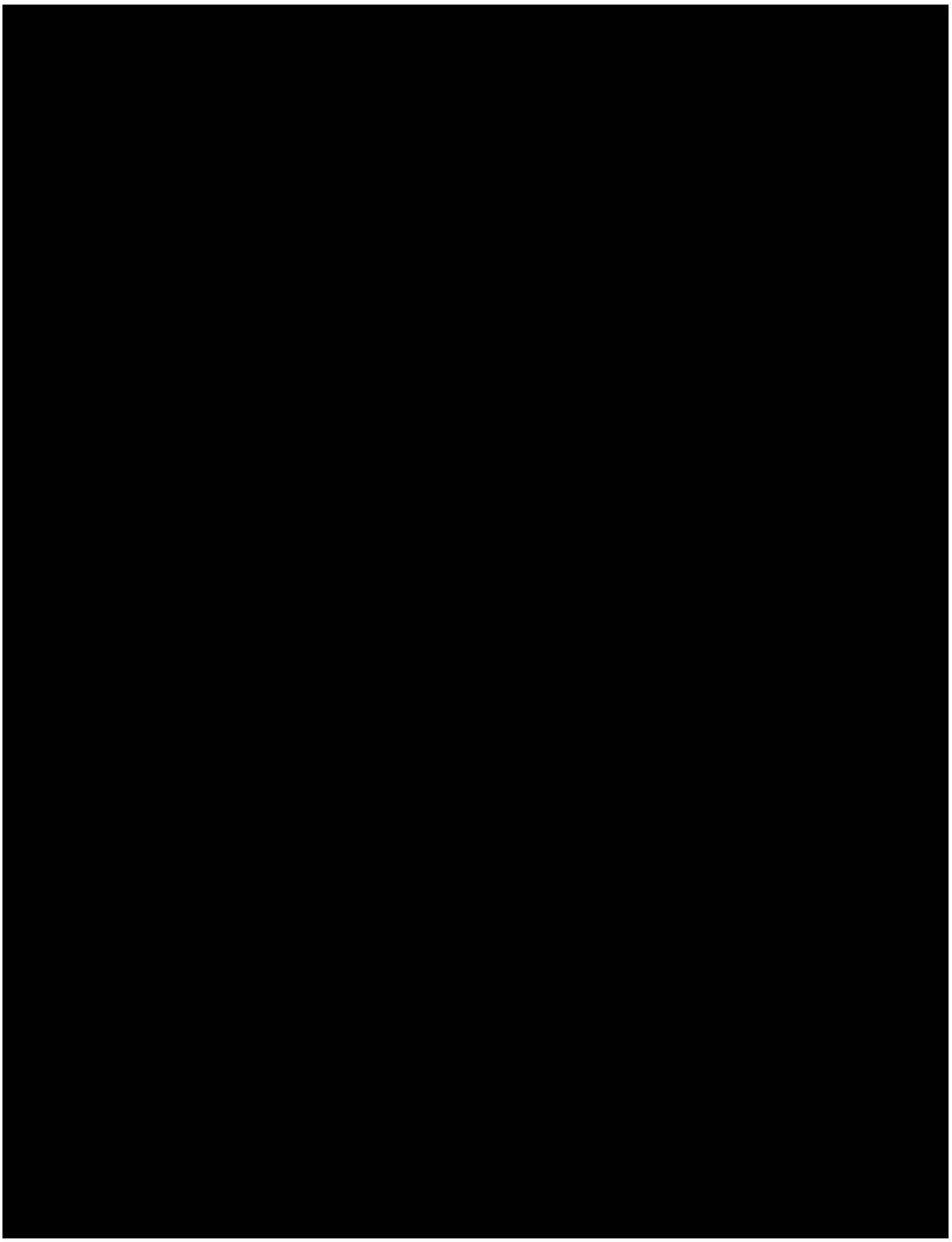
On the next pages are Memoranda of Understanding between Merit and the four sub-recipients identified in this proposal. Below is contact information for representatives of these organizations.

Organization:	LYNX Network Group, LLC (LYNX)
Address:	PO Box 237
City/State/ZIP:	Kalamazoo, MI 49004
Contact person:	Chris Barber
Phone:	269-585-1003
Email:	cbarber@goLNG.co

Organization:	The Iserv Company, Inc. (Iserv)
Address:	5222 33rd Street SE,
City/State/ZIP:	Grand Rapids, MI 49512
Contact person:	Todd A. Gardner
Phone:	616-493-3727
Email:	toddg@iserv.net

Organization:	The Computer Care Company, Inc. (TC3Net)
Address:	247 S. Main St.
City/State/ZIP:	Adrian, MI 49221
Contact person:	Joe Mattausch
Phone:	517-266-0402
Email:	joe@tc3net.com

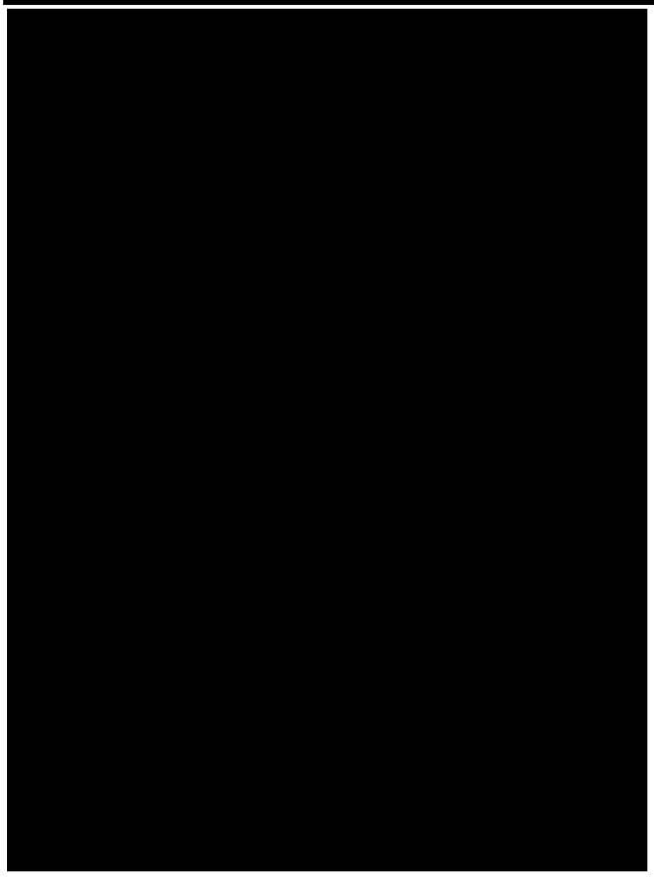
Organization:	KEPS Technologies, Inc. (ACD.net)
Address:	1800 N Grand River Ave.
City/State/ZIP:	Lansing MI 48906
Contact person:	Kevin Schoen
Phone:	1.877.422.3638
Email:	schoen.kevin@acd.net

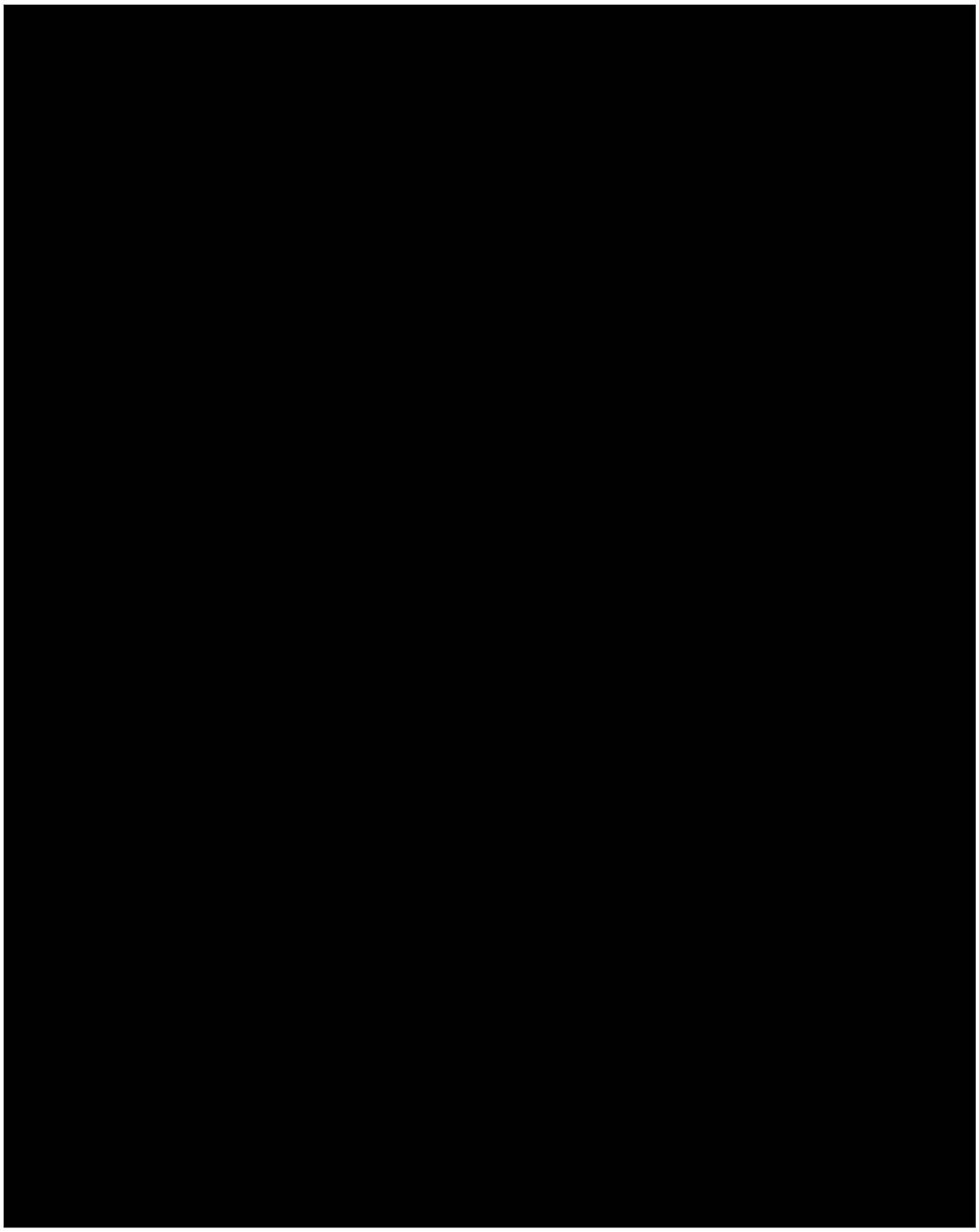


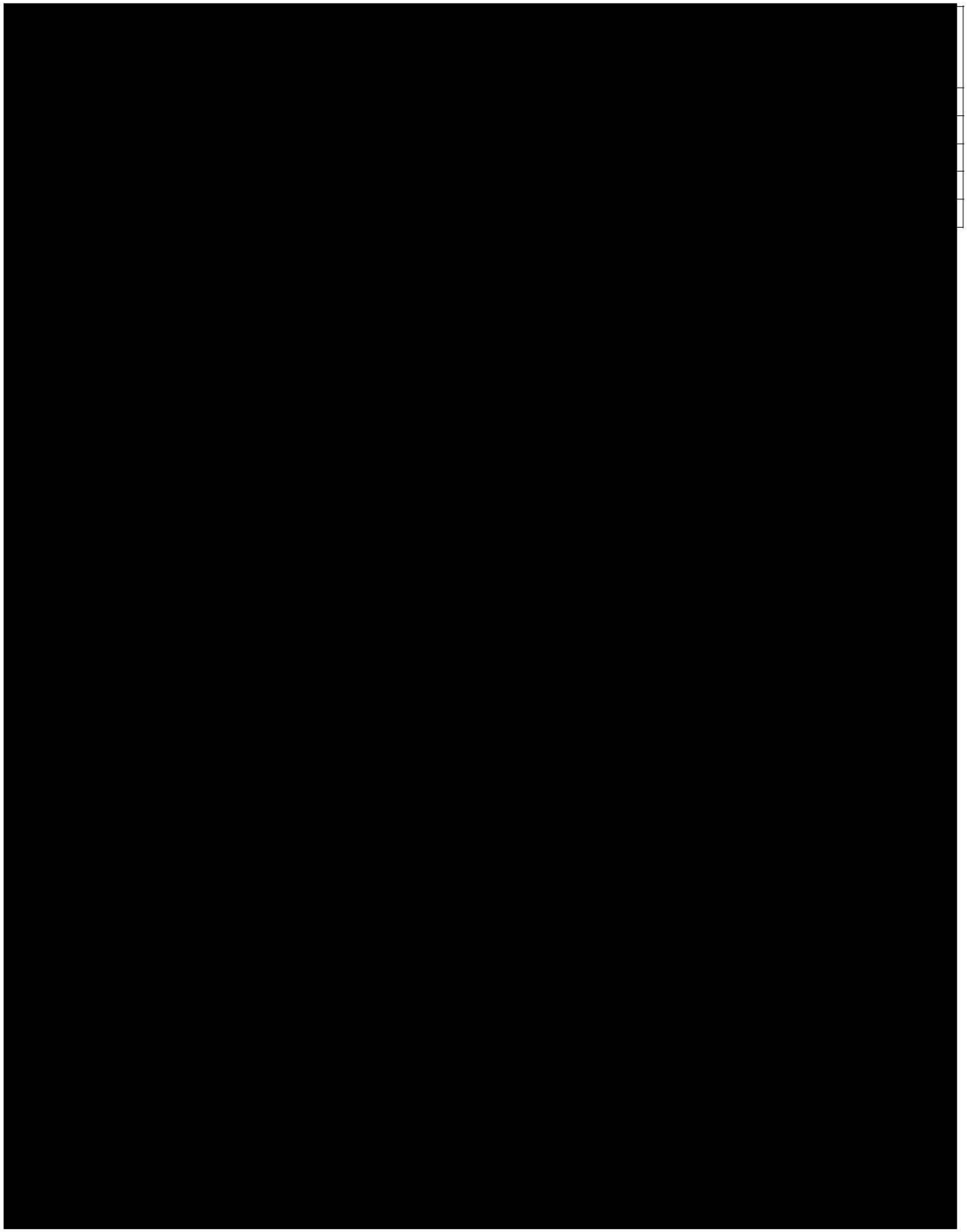
Q-41 Attachment: Government and Other Key Partnerships

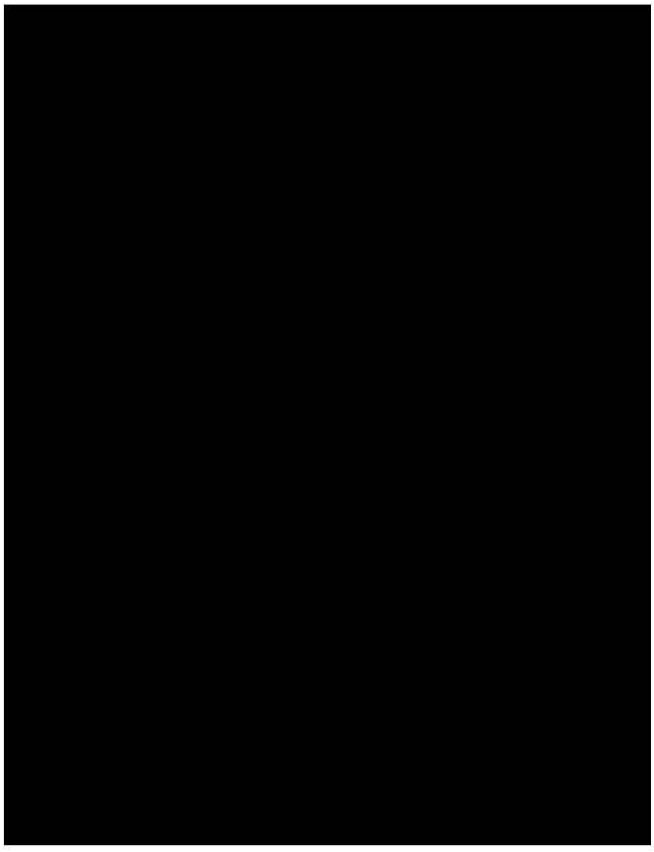
Segment	Miles	Total Strands	[redacted] Strands	Total Cost	[redacted] Matching Funds	[redacted] Matching Funds
[redacted]						

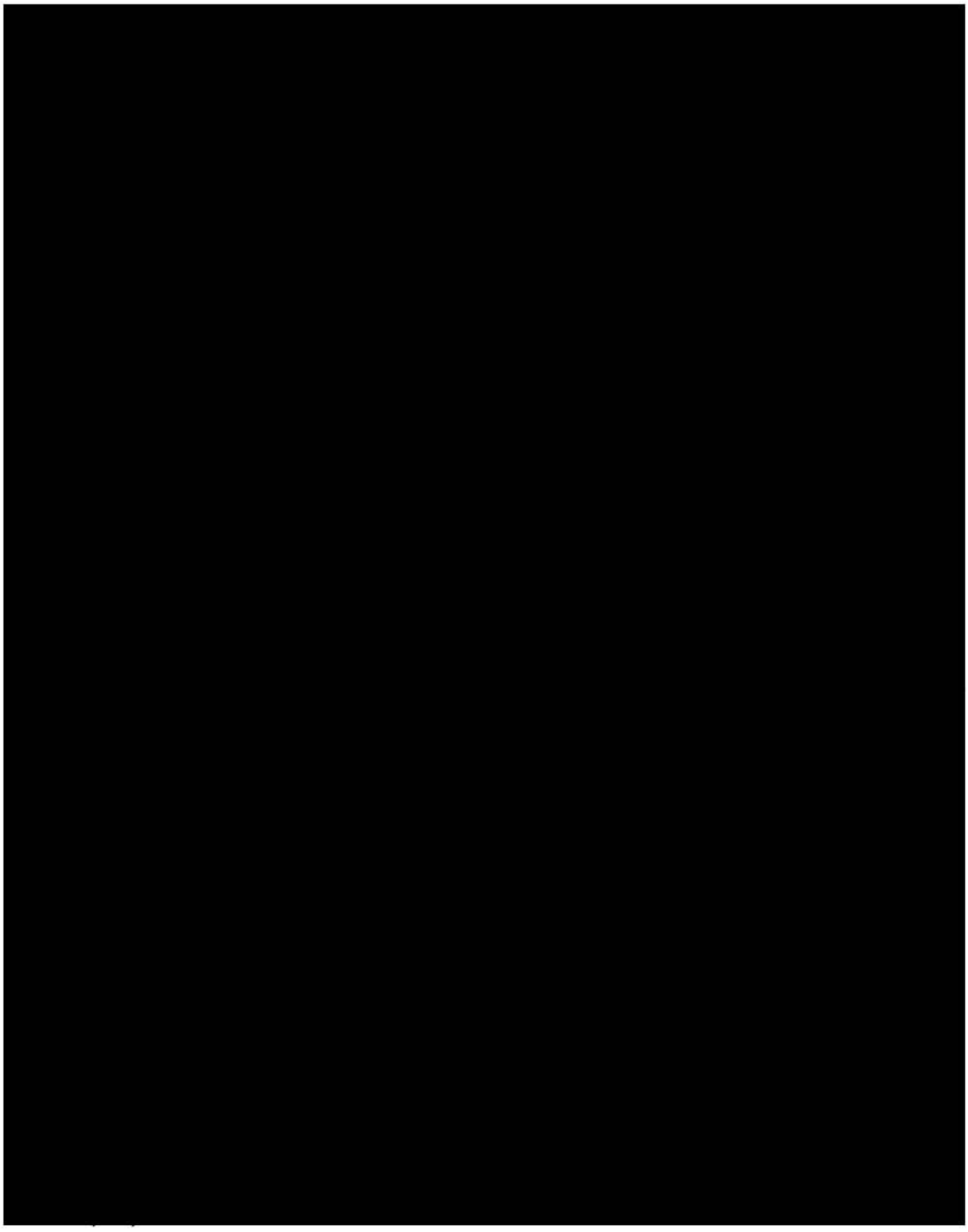
[redacted]

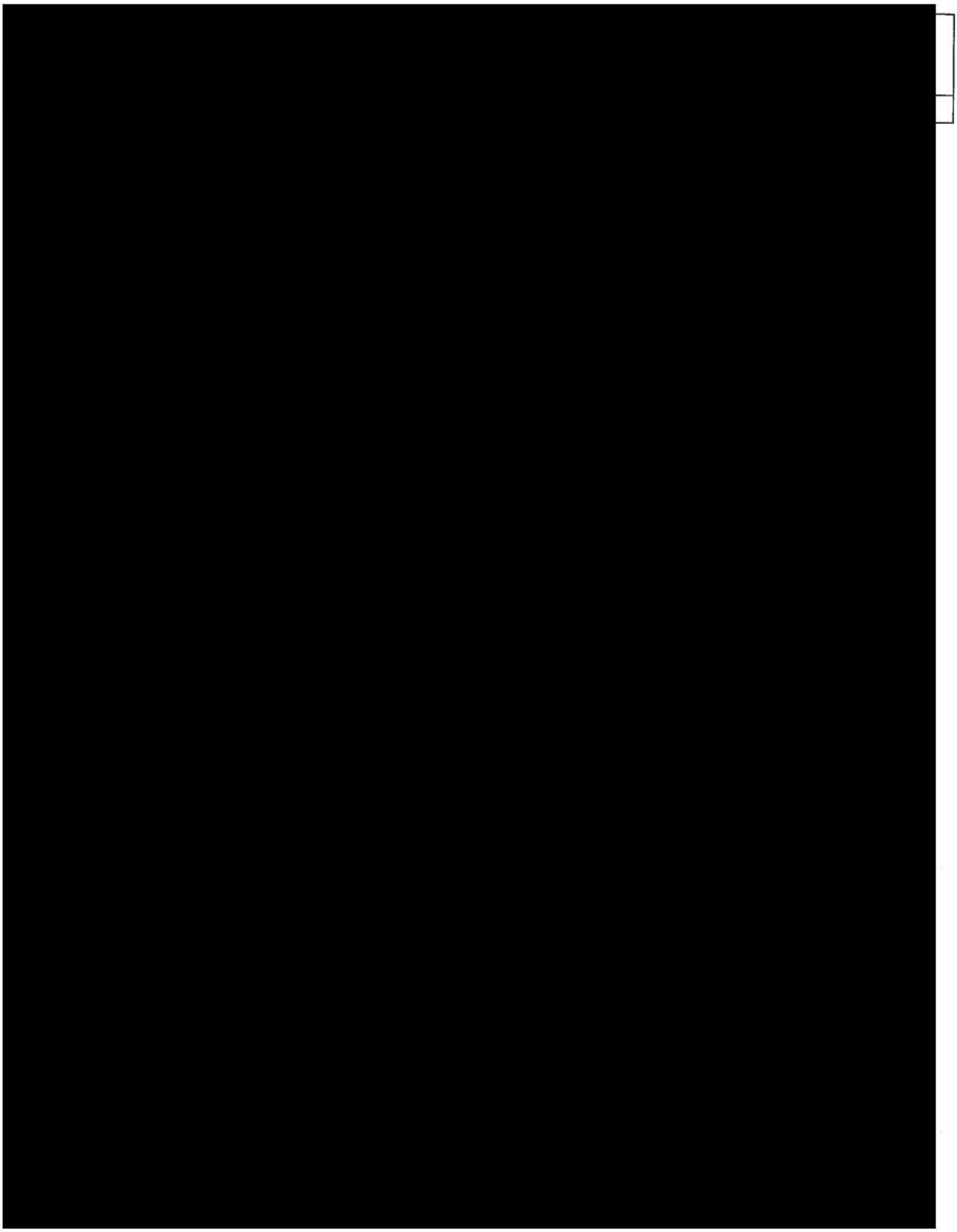


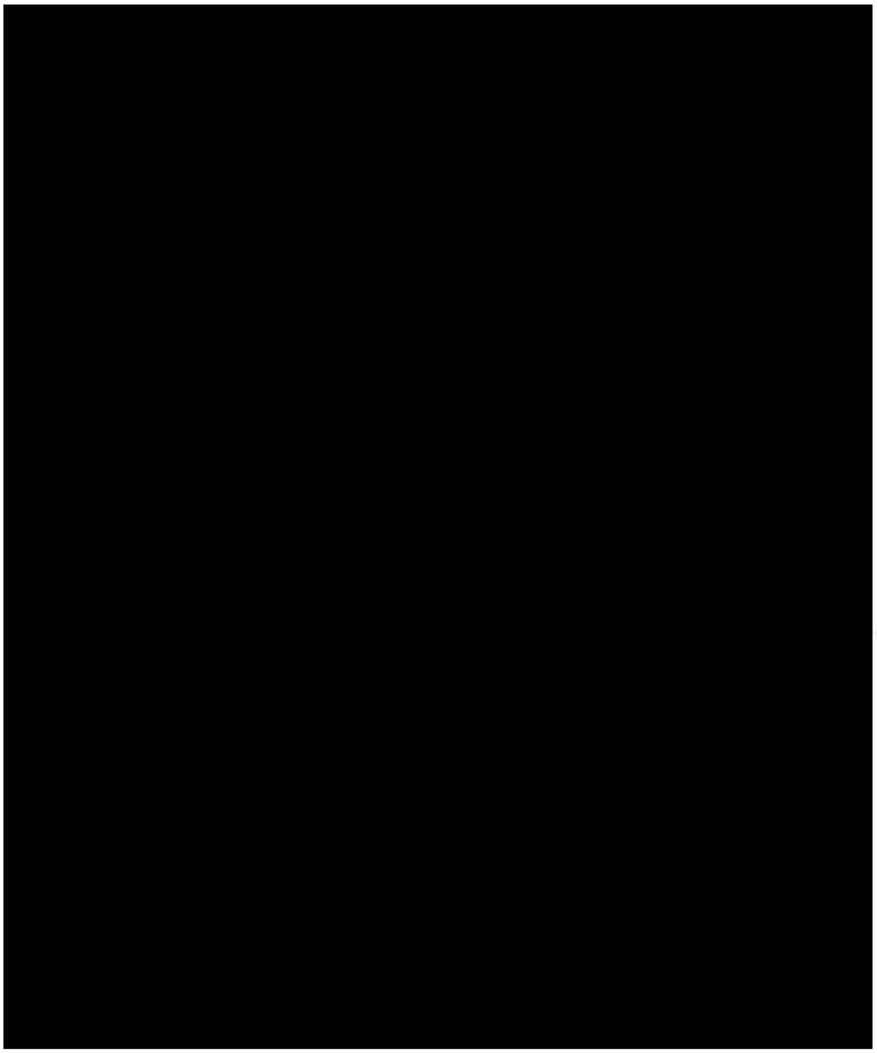


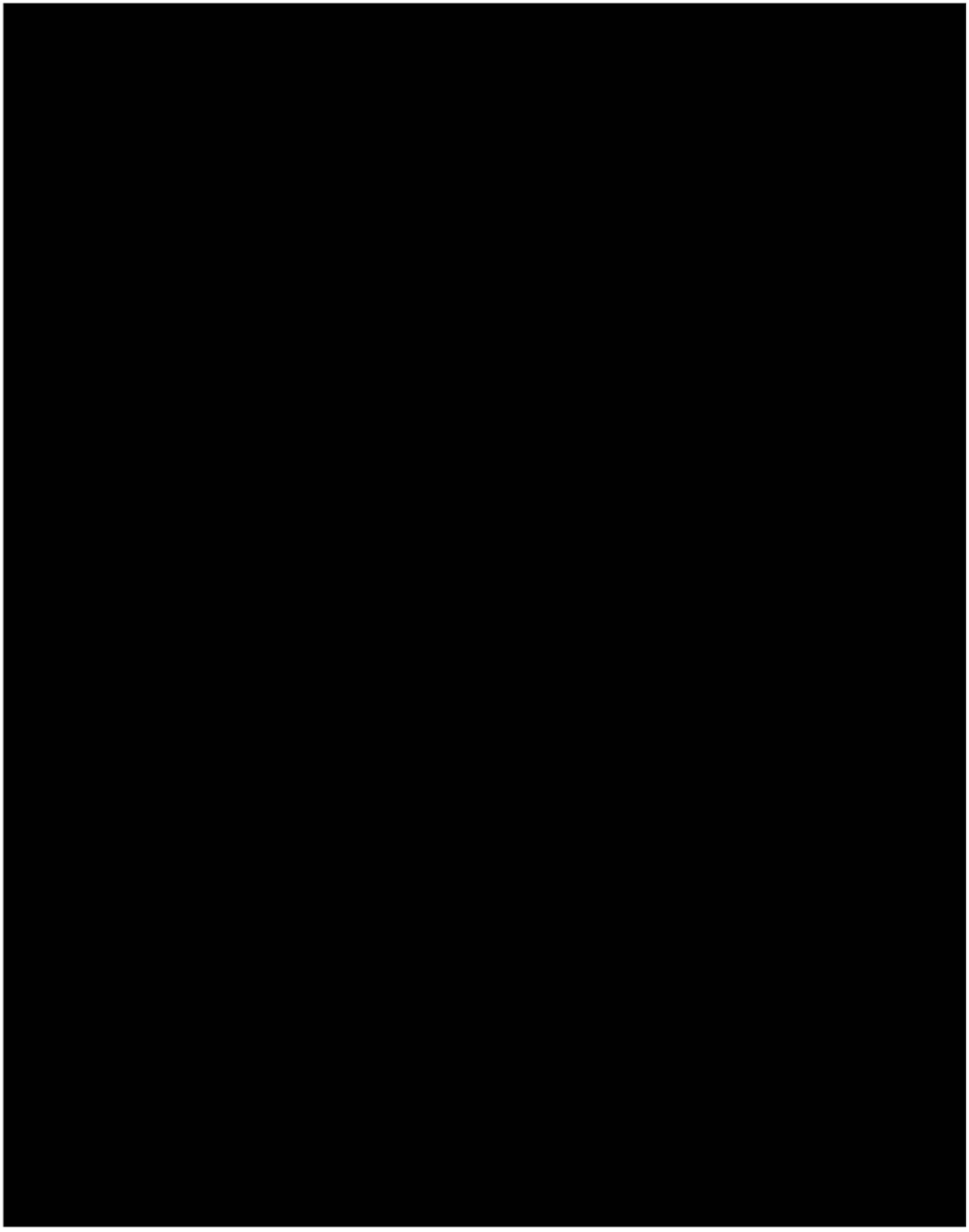


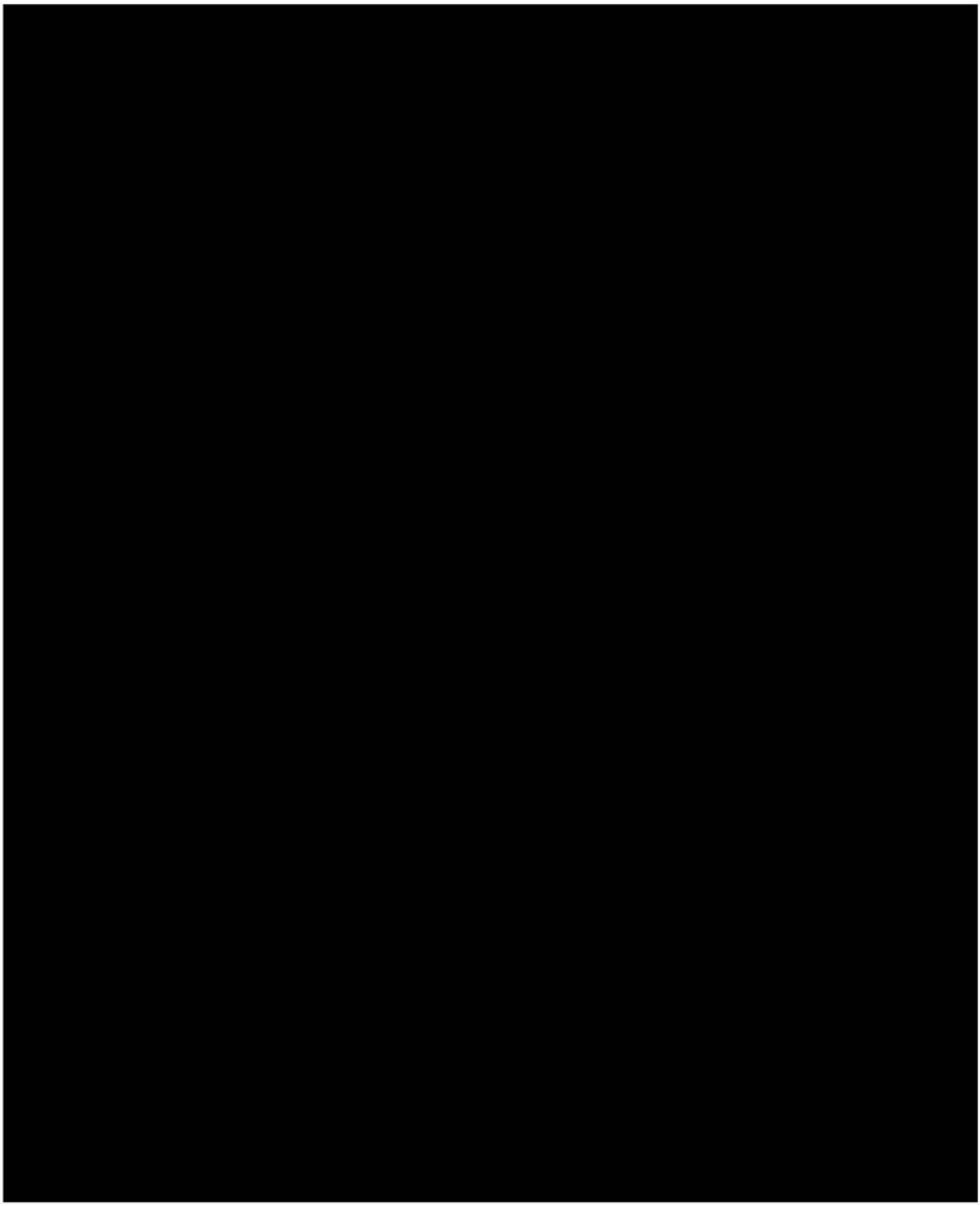


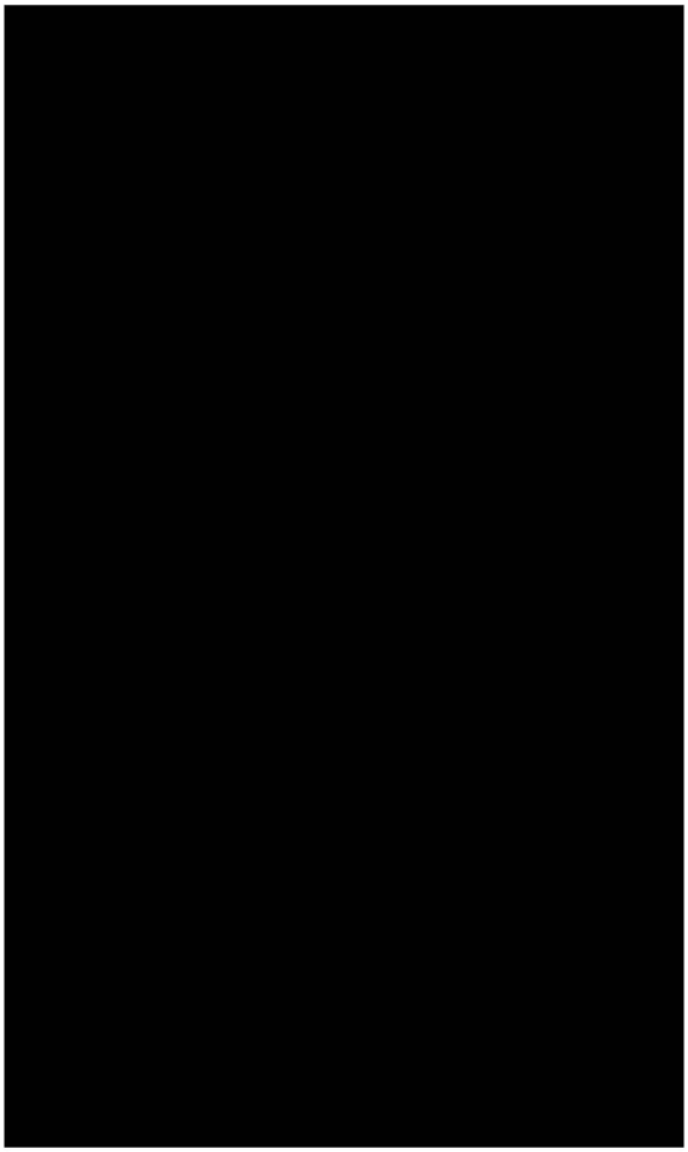












Additional Key Partnerships

The following companies are collaborating with Merit and the sub-recipients on network segments elsewhere in Michigan. Letters of collaboration follow from Allband Communications Cooperative and Boardman River Communications.

Organization:	Allband Communications Cooperative
Address:	P.O. Box #8
City/State/ZIP:	Curran, MI 48728
Contact person:	Ron K. Siegel
Phone:	989-369-9870
Email:	ron.siegel@allband.org

Organization:	Boardman River Communications
Address:	P.O. Box 17
City/State/ZIP:	South Boardman, MI 49680
Contact person:	Gary L. John, Jr.
Phone:	231-369-2500
Email:	gjohn@boardmanrivercommunications.com

Organization:	Peninsula Fiber Network (PFN)
Address:	108 West Superior Street
City/State/ZIP:	Munising, MI 49862
Contact person:	Paul Stark
Phone:	906-387-6617
Email:	pwstark@up.net

Infinity is not impossible

ALLBAND

COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Dr. Welch:

Allband Communications Cooperative is please to collaborate with Merit Network, Inc. related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Broadband Initiatives. We are submitting an application for support under the BIP and BTOP Programs for last mile broadband distribution to unserved areas in northern Lower Michigan. Allband Communications Cooperative is an Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier that serves residents in parts of Alcona, Alpena, Oscoda, and Montmorency Counties over a completely fiber optic network, and will provide this same advanced, affordable and reliable broadband access to other unserved businesses and residents in Northeast Michigan.

Included in our proposal is a fiber optic build that will span from Mackinac City to Oscoda along what Merit is defining as your "Eastern Corridor". We are noting in our plan, the anticipation that Merit would be procuring eighteen strands of dark fiber, which once lit by Merit, will complement Merit Network's current network, and Merit's proposed REACH Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative (REACH-3MC) application to the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) of the National Telecommunications Infrastructure Administration (NTIA) of the Department of Commerce to allow Merit and its collaborators to provide service to Anchor institutions, households, and businesses throughout the entire state.

As a member of Merit, Allband looks forward to continuing collaboration in order to extend and optimize broadband services throughout the state of Michigan.

Best regards,

Ron K. Siegel

7251 Cemetery Road
P.O. Box 8
Curran, MI 48728
Phone: (989) 369-9999
Fax: (989) 369-9998
Email: info@allband.org
www.allband.org

Boardman River Communications

P.O. Box 17

South Boardman, MI 49680

Phone: (231) 369-2500

Fax: (231) 369-2771

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Dr. Welch:

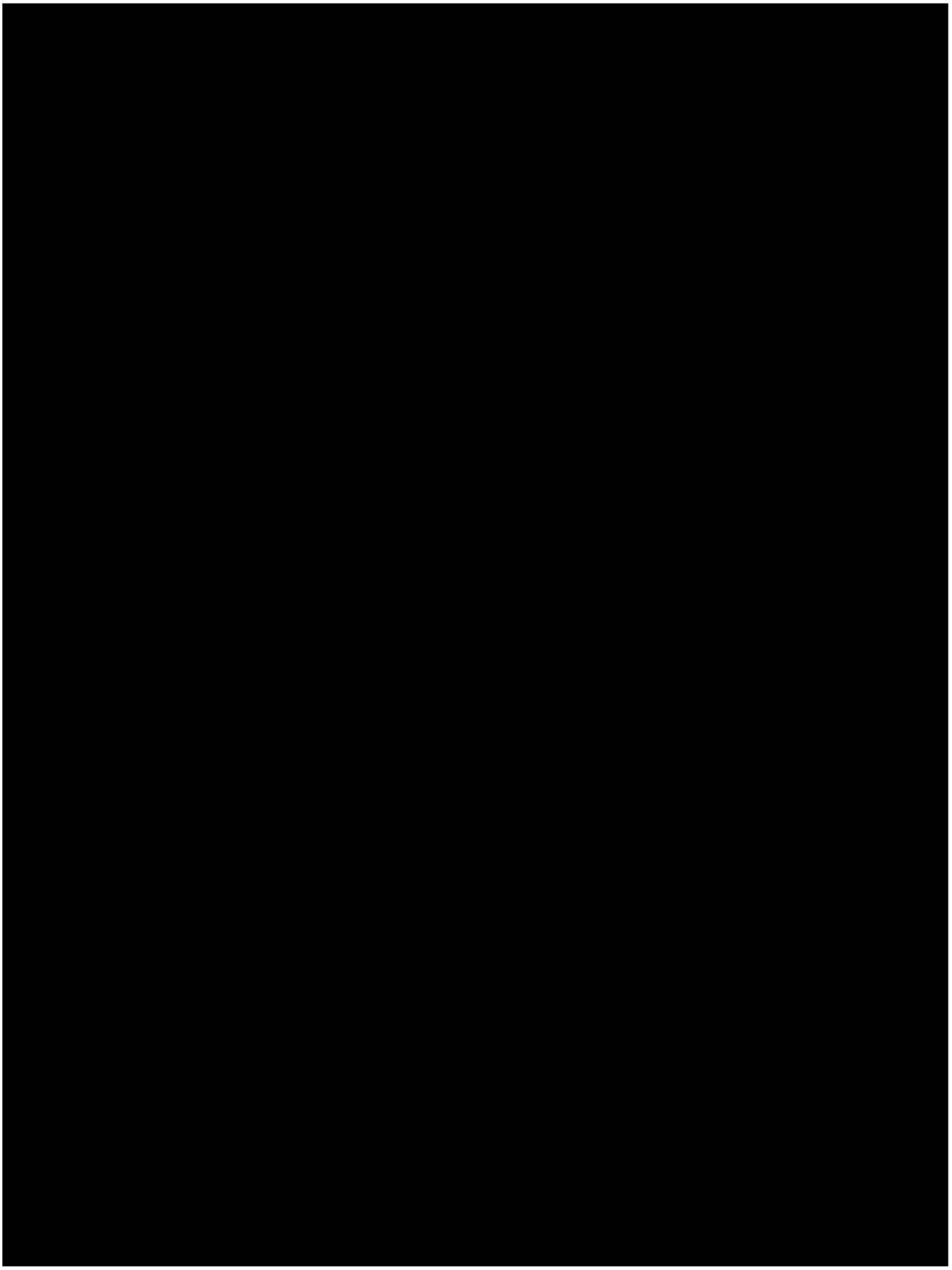
Boardman River Communications is pleased to collaborate with Merit Network, Inc. related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Broadband Initiatives. We are submitting an application for support under the BIP Program for underserved and unserved areas of Kalkaska County, Michigan

Included in our proposal is a fiber optic build into Kalkaska, Michigan. We are noting in our plan that Boardman River Communications infrastructure will connect to Merit's proposed REACH Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative (REACH-3MC) application to the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) of the National Telecommunications Infrastructure Administration (NTIA) of the Department of Commerce to allow Merit and its collaborators to provide service to Anchor institutions, households, and businesses throughout the entire state.

Boardman River Communications looks forward to continuing collaboration in order to extend and optimize broadband services throughout the state of Michigan.

Best regards,

Gary L. John, Jr.
Managing Partner



Letters from State and National Organizations

On the following pages are letters from the State of Michigan Department of Information Technology and Internet2 regarding this proposal.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
dit
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
KENNETH D. THEIS
DIRECTOR

August 5, 2009

Don Welch, President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Dear Mr. Welch,

This correspondence, on behalf of the State of Michigan, is to commend your involvement in advancing the goals of Michigan for broadband deployment through funding opportunities presented by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

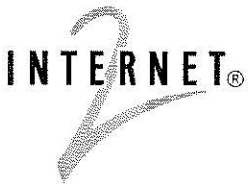
As a provider actively involved in collaborating with the State of Michigan and its vision for broadband deployment, we applaud your organization's efforts and encourage you to continue to coordinate with us. This demonstrated transparency has allowed us to further enhance our strategic plan for broadband infrastructure deployment in Michigan. Such actions are essential in fulfilling the NTIA and RUS directives.

The State of Michigan would like to take this moment to acknowledge your work in extending the reach of broadband to Michigan's unserved and underserved areas. While the State has not yet had the opportunity to review your proposal, we recognize your concerted efforts to work with key stakeholders during the development phase. Given the breadth of this collaborative effort, the State of Michigan urges NTIA and RUS to weigh this information when considering Merit Network, Inc.'s proposal during the initial screening of applicants.

In the unfolding era of an online, service-driven world, a robust communications and Internet infrastructure is critical. The deployment of broadband services will play an important role in the nation's and Michigan's economic resurgence. Thank you for your participation in this effort.

Sincerely,

Kenneth D. Theis
Director and CIO



Internet2
Office of the President & CEO
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 300
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 913-4250
(734) 913-4255 (fax)
www.internet2.edu

August 6, 2009

Donald J. Welch, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Merit Networks, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive
Ann Arbor MI 48104

Dear Don:

On behalf of Internet2, I am pleased to write in support of the proposal entitled "REACH Michigan Middle Mile Collaborative (REACH-3MC,)" which you are submitting to the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (NTIA BTOP).

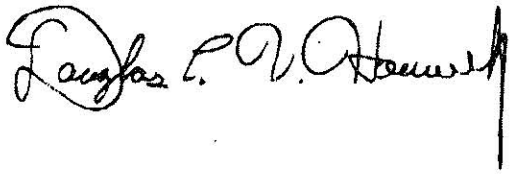
This proposal will leverage Merit's 43 years as the State of Michigan's education network through a collaboration with commercial providers that will allow low cost connectivity of up to 10Gbps to multiple anchor institutions, and interconnection with middle and last mile providers. Ultimately, this will include statewide last-mile benefit to last mile providers and other ARRA applicants, ultimately benefiting households, businesses, and public safety entities. This proposal is likely to facilitate economic growth in isolated geographic areas, job creation through project maintenance and construction, and enhance the availability of affordable broadband service throughout the state. Internet2 believes the REACH project responds effectively to the NTIA BTOP's goals of 1) enhancing the economy through increased access to broadband services; 2) connecting community anchor institutions in unserved and underserved areas; 3) fostering broadband adoption with advanced technology well in excess of FCC broadband standards; 4) providing open transparent management and 5) providing multi-gigabit advanced connectivity to the connected entities.

Internet2 is pleased to have had a long and effective partnership with Merit and other regional connectors. Internet2 is a consortium of advanced networking institutions in the United States. Led by the research and education community since 1996, Internet2 promotes the missions of its members by providing both leading-edge network capabilities and unique partnership opportunities that facilitate the development, deployment and use of revolutionary Internet technologies. With Internet2 Network's unique features of dynamic provisioning and carrier class reliability, and a governance structure that includes regional and campus representation, Internet2 is uniquely positioned to support the work

of the network research community, particularly in ambitious initiatives such as those offered by the NTIA BTOP.

We are pleased to offer our support of this important project.

Sincerely,



Douglas E. Van Houweling
President and CEO, Internet2

Letters of Support: Anchor Institutions

On the following pages are letters of support for this proposal from the potential anchor institutions listed below. The letters are in the following geographic order.

County	Corridor	Organization	Type
Monroe	Southern	Monroe County Library	Library
Lenawee	Southern	Adrian College	Higher Education
Lenawee	Southern	City of Adrian/Adrian Public Library	Library
Lenawee	Southern	City of Adrian/Adrian Fire Department	Public Safety
Lenawee	Southern	Lenawee Intermediate School District	K-12
Hillsdale	Southern	Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities	Commercial
Hillsdale	Southern	Hillsdale County Intermediate School District	K-12
Branch	Southern	Baker College - Coldwater	Higher Education
St. Joseph	Southern	Three Rivers Public Library	Library
Cass	Southern	Ferris State University - Dowagiac	Higher Education
Berrien	Southern	Berrien Regional Education Service Agency	K-12
Berrien	Southern	Western Michigan University - Benton Harbor	Higher Education
Van Buren	Western	Western Michigan University - South Haven	Higher Education
Allegan	Western	Fennville District Library	Library
Ottawa	Western	Ottawa Area Intermediate School District	K-12
Muskegon	Western	Western Michigan University - Muskegon	Higher Education
Oceana	Western	Village of Pentwater	Government
Mason	Western	Michigan Works! West Central	Community Service
Mason	Western	West Shore Community College	Higher Education
Lake	Western	Lake County	Government
Lake	Western	Michigan Works! West Central (see above)	Community Service
Manistee	Western	Northwest Michigan Council of Governments - Manistee	Government
Benzie	Western	Benzie Shores District Library	Library
Benzie	Western	City of Frankfort	Government
Antrim	Western	Northwest Mich. Community Health Agcy. - Mancelona	Community Service
Grand Traverse	Western	Traverse Area District Library	Library
Kalkaska	Western	North Country Community Mental Health - Kalkaska	Community Service
Charlevoix	Western	Charlevoix Public Library	Library
Charlevoix	Western	Charlevoix Public Schools	K-12
Emmett	Western	North Central Michigan College	Higher Education
Emmett	Western	University of Michigan Biological Research Station	Higher Education
Montmorency	Central	Hillman, Fletcher Pond, Thunder Bay Visitor's Bureau	Community Service
Montmorency	Central	Village of Hillman	Government
Otsego	Central	University Center at Gaylord	Higher Education
Crawford	Central	Northeast Michigan Consortium - Michigan Works!	Community Service
Roscommon	Central	Houghton Lake Public Library	Library
Gladwin	Central	Beaverton Rural Schools - Gladwin	K-12
Gladwin	Central	City of Beaverton	Government
Gladwin	Central	City of Gladwin	Government
Gladwin	Central	Gladwin City Housing Commission	Community Service
Gladwin	Central	Gladwin Community Schools	K-12
Gladwin	Central	Gladwin County Board of District Commissioners	Government
Gladwin	Central	Gladwin County District Library	Library
Gladwin	Central	Gladwin County Economic Development Corporation	Community Service
Gladwin	Central	Pere Marquette District Library	Library

Continued on next page

Letters of Support: Anchor Institutions (continued)

Clare	Central	Clare County Enterprise Community	Community Service
Clare	Central	Consumers Energy	Commercial
Clare	Central	MidMichigan Community College	Higher Education
Isabella	Central	Chippewa River District Library	Library
Isabella	Central	Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Services District	K-12
Midland	Eastern	MidMichigan Medical Center - Midland	Health Care
Bay	Eastern	Spring Arbor University - Bay City	Higher Education
Arenac	Eastern	Iosco-Arenac District Library	Library
Iosco	Eastern	Iosco-Arenac District Library (see above)	Library
Iosco	Eastern	Alpena Community College - Huron Shores	Higher Education
Other	Other	Davenport University	Higher Education
Other	Other	Michigan State University	Higher Education
Other	Other	Regional Educational Media Center #10	K-12
Other	Other	Tuscola Intermediate School District	K-12

MONROE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
840 South Roessler Street, Monroe, MI 48161-1557
(734) 241-5770
http://monroe.lib.mi.us

August 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the Monroe County Library System in Monroe, MI. This will enable our institution to provide better network connectivity between branches as well as Internet service for our patrons. We anticipate that this will result in many more of our patrons being able to use our public Internet services.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Monroe County Library System is pleased to continue a relationship that is beneficial to the Monroe County Library System and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Nancy Colpaert
Director
Monroe County Library System
nancy.colpaert@monroe.lib.mi.us
734-241-5770

Director: Nancy J. Colpaert
Trustees: Elizabeth J. Taylor, Chair
MaryAnn Bourque, Vice-Chair
Laurence F. Gregory, Secretary
Catharine Calder, Trustee
Fred E. Lux, Trustee

ADRIAN COLLEGE
ADRIAN, MI 49221

Date Aug 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as Adrian College, Adrian branch of Jackson Community College, Sienna University, local libraries, Adrian city and county municipalities located in Adrian and throughout Lenawee County. This will enable our institution to reduce cost of bandwidth, provide redundancy and to provide better and less expensive bandwidth services to students, staff, and faculty. We anticipate that this will result in increased student retention and enrollment for all college(s) and universities who participate, in addition to the benefits the libraries and municipalities would receive.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

As Director of Information Services at Adrian College, I would be pleased to participate in a relationship that is beneficial to Adrian College, the greater Adrian community, and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Steve Stempien
Adrian College
sstempien@adrian.edu
517-264-3342

City of Adrian

143 E. Maumee St. • Adrian, Michigan 49221-2773

Adrian Public Library

(517) 265-2265 • Fax (517) 265-8847
www.adrian.lib.mi.us

August 5, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Webb
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch,

I am writing this letter expressing support for Merit Network Inc.'s application for the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program in behalf of the Adrian Public Library and the City of Adrian.

We are pleased to partner in this project and look forward to the positive impact that the installation of Broadband Service will have on our community and Lenawee County. We are currently undergoing an expanded renovation at our library and relocating our municipal complex to our downtown area. The City of Adrian is investing over a million dollars in renovating the library which will result in additional space for a Small Business and Entrepreneur Center. The library renovation includes an expansion of 3,200 square feet and includes the creation of a coffee shop, expanding our focus on teens and young adults, along with opening up a new mezzanine area for public use. The library is an integral component of our new Downtown City Government Complex, a multi-million dollar investment in downtown, that also includes a renovated historical bank building for City Hall, a new police facility, Farmers' Market and reutilizing a former historical post office into a Community Meeting Room. The proposed project will bring Broadband down one of our main streets in front of the city complex campus and provide a multitude of benefits to our library and community.

Our City, like many others in Michigan, is struggling with the impact of the loss of jobs related to the automobile industry. Lenawee County's most recent unemployment rate was 18%. Our community is suffering severe economic challenges as we transition from an industrial and automobile based economy to a focus on service and alternative energy industries.

This project will allow our library to expand service to the small business/entrepreneur community, provide students with long distance education opportunities, help us retrain automobile workers for new jobs, access local, state and federal government resources, create a computer lab in our building to address the increased technology needs of our residents and much more. The impact on our overall community is even greater. This proposal will provide an impetus for downtown development, creation of new businesses, expansion of current business, and provide expanded networking opportunities with local government and educational institutions such as Adrian College, Siena Heights University,

City of Adrian
Adrian Public Library
143 E. Maumee St. • Adrian, Michigan 49221-2773
(517) 265-2265 • Fax (517) 265-8847
www.adrian.lib.mi.us

Jackson Community College, Lenawee Intermediate School District, Lenawee County and connect us to other educational and governmental resources in the State of Michigan.

Merit is a respected institution in Michigan's library and education community and has a strong history of providing advanced networking services throughout the State of Michigan. Merit offers their experience, quality of service, and expertise to meet the needs of Michigan's unserved and underserved communities.

The City of Adrian and the Adrian Public Library are pleased with the opportunity this proposal presents to develop a relationship with Merit that will be beneficial to both our organizations and have such a significant impact on our greater community.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this matter further or need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Carol Souchock

Carol Souchock
Library Director
City of Adrian
Adrian Public Library
143 E. Maumee St.
Adrian, MI 49221
csouchock@ci.adrian.mi.us

City of Adrian

208 S. Main St. • Adrian, Michigan 49221

Fire Department

(517) 263-2161 • Fax (517) 264-2782

August 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the City of Adrian and Adrian City Library in Lenawee County. This will enable our institution to insure customer service, provide bandwidth for daily operations and make offsite backup and restore processes to our vendors safer and more efficient. We anticipate that this will result in better public service and more efficiency in our business operations.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The City of Adrian Information Technology Department is pleased to develop a relationship that is beneficial to our community and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Paul G. Trinka

Paul G. Trinka, Fire Chief/Director of Information Technology
City of Adrian
208 South Main Street
Adrian, MI 49221
517-264-4879
pgtrinka@ci.addrian.mi.us

Lenawee Intermediate School District
Your Partner in Education for a Changing Tomorrow

August 13, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch, President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104 - 6794

RE: APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FUNDS FOR BROADBAND SERVICES

Dear Dr. Welch:

It is with great pleasure that I provide the Lenawee Intermediate School District's (LISD) support for Merit Network Inc.'s intentions to seek federal funds through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) for the purposes of enhancing the provision of broadband internet services to Lenawee County, Michigan residents.

As a regional educational services provider, the LISD recognizes the added value that accessibility to broadband services brings to a community. The accessibility to affordable, high-speed internet access for commercial, residential and institutional users is an extremely important resource for our community. High-speed internet has been proven to boost productivity in the workplace and in school.

With an unemployment rate that is quickly approaching 20%, Lenawee County has and is continuing to experience the adverse impact of our current economic climate. As we work to ensure that our students are adequately prepared to succeed in a world that will be very different than that of today, it is increasingly more important that our students, teachers and schools have access to a large amount of information in a short period of time. Additionally, student's familiarity and comfort level with internet resources and technology is a key indicator of that individual's potential for success in many careers.

Your efforts are likely to improve the service options for our district and for each of Lenawee County's local school districts. Additionally as more service options become available, the cost of service becomes more competitive and thus much more affordable.

We appreciate the efforts of Merit Network Inc. and other internet service providers to expand and enhance the availability and quality of broadband services in our community, and look forward to working with your company to ensure that all of Lenawee County has access to broadband services.

Should you have any questions, or desire any additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me at steve.krusich@lisd.us.

Respectfully,

Steve Krusich
Superintendent

William J. Ross Education Service Center ~ 4107 N. Adrian Hwy. • Adrian, MI 49221 • P: 517-265-2119 • F: 517-265-7405
Milton C. Porter Education Center ~ 2946 Sutton Rd. • Adrian, MI 49221 • P: 517-263-8931 • F: 517-263-2890
LISD VO-TECH Center ~ 1372 N. Main St. • Adrian, MI 49221 • P: 517-263-2108 • F: 517-263-9433
Trenton Hills Learning Center ~ 1008 W. Maple Ave. • Adrian, MI 49221 • P: 517-263-6354 • F: 517-266-0379
www.lisd.us

Q-41 Attachment: Government and Other Key Partnerships

Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities
45 Monroe Street • P.O. Box 279
Hillsdale, Michigan 49242-0279
Telephone: 517/437-3387
FAX: 517/437-3388

August 11, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will provide additional critical broadband infrastructure to anchor institutions in the City of Hillsdale and Hillsdale County, such as the Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities, The City of Hillsdale, Hillsdale Community Library, Hillsdale County Intermediate School District, Hillsdale College, Hillsdale Community Health Center, Jackson Community College, Hillsdale County Government, South Central Michigan Works and others. This infrastructure will enable our institution to collaborate with the State of Michigan, Merit Networks and private companies to develop a public private partnership for the development of a Technology Park with a Data Center at the core of the project. This project will create a new industry that doesn't currently exist in Hillsdale County, create new high paying jobs, and transform our work force from an industrial based economy to a technology based economy. In addition, a private ISP in our county has already started collaborating with the Hillsdale BPU and Merit to take advantage of the benefits this new infrastructure would bring. By reducing this ISP's cost for back haul service, they would expand and invest in new infrastructure which would lead to additional jobs.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities is pleased to continue a relationship that is extremely beneficial to the Hillsdale County area and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Eric L Macy
Hillsdale Board of Public Utilities
eric_macy@nonik.com
(517) 437-4294

HILLSDALE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

310 West Bacon Street – Hillsdale, Michigan 49242
(517) 437-0990 – FAX (517) 439-4388

Superintendent
Robert W. Henthorne

Board of Education
Parke Hayes, President
Sara Lisznyai, Vice-Pres.
Judy Glei, Secretary/Treasurer
Michelle Masta, Trustee
Bill Smith, Trustee

8/10/2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as over 13 Intermediate School Districts and over 4 Educational Regions, as well as colleges and universities, throughout Southern Michigan. This will also enable our institution to provide Distance Learning and collaborative curriculum initiatives throughout this multi-region area, providing educational experiences for students otherwise overlooked, partnerships between municipalities to share data resources like VOIP technology and data warehousing, internet and data-sharing support for current and potential industry, and better communication between all of our governmental and non-profit agencies. We anticipate that this will result in creating a better educational environment for our students, bring in much-needed business and industry, and offer many more programs and collaboration efforts between our county and educational regional service agencies.

Merit's over 40-year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of un-served and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Hillsdale County Intermediate School District is pleased to continue this relationship that is beneficial to both Hillsdale County Intermediate School District and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

JC Morris
Supervisor of Technology
Hillsdale County intermediate School District/SCMW!
jmorris@hillsdale-isd.org / jmorris@scmw.org
517-437-0990 x128

Q-41 Attachment: Government and Other Key Partnerships

Baker College
Since 1911

Baker College System Headquarters
1050 West Bristol Road
Flint, Michigan 48507
Telephone (810) 766-4280
Fax (810) 766-4279
Internet: www.baker.edu

8/3/2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

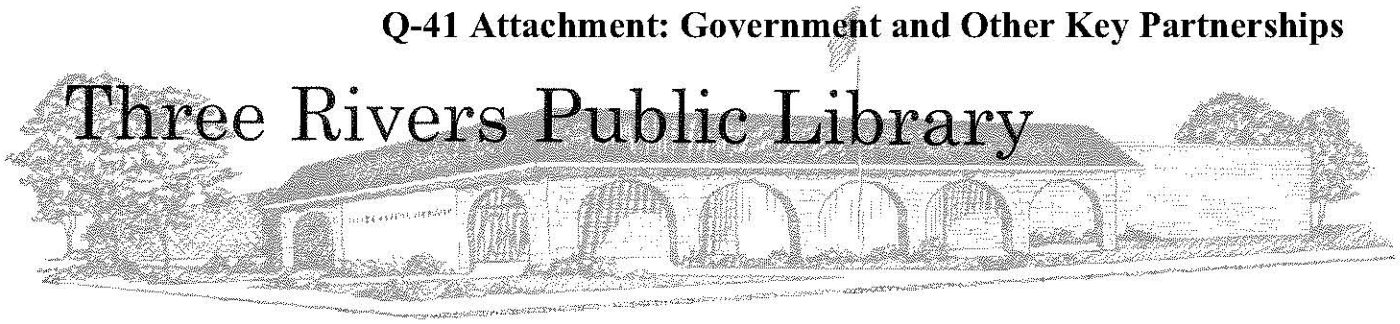
The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the Baker College Campus in Coldwater, Branch county Michigan. This would enable our institution to expand services to our students. This would result in lower costs for our infrastructure services and allow us to better service our students.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and under served communities throughout Michigan.

Baker College would be pleased to continue our relationship that is beneficial to both Baker College and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Ron Belill
Baker College
ron@baker.edu
810.766.4060



TELEPHONE 269-273-8666
FAX 269-279-9654

920 W. MICHIGAN AVENUE
THREE RIVERS, MI 49093

August 2, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the Three Rivers Public Library in St. Joseph County, Michigan. This will enable our institution to greatly improve the speed of our internet access services. We anticipate that this will result in improved services to the nearly 10,000 patrons who frequent this library from the city of Three Rivers, Park Township, Fabius Township, Lockport Township and other surrounding areas.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Three Rivers Public Library is pleased to support a relationship that is beneficial to this library and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Shirley Cody

Shirley Cody
Director
Three Rivers Public Library
scody@threeriverslibrary.org
269-273-8666

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

August 4, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to Ferris State University students attending at Southwestern Michigan College in Dowagiac, Michigan. Changes in our economy resulting in job losses and career changes, work and family responsibilities, and the State of Michigan's mandate that all high school students must have some type of online course experience before graduating are contributing factors to the increased demand for online education. This will enable our institutions to collaborate in shared internet resources to reduce cost and provide for improved delivery of on-line learning programs.

Merit's 40+ year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions it well to meet the needs of un-served and under-served communities throughout Michigan.

Ferris State University supports Merit's proposal because it facilitates education for our youth and adult population, allows for collaboration between higher education institutions, and facilitates economic development. It is for these reasons that Ferris State University is eager to support the proposal by Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

John L Urbanick
Ferris State University
urbanicj@ferris.edu
231-591-2138

BERRIEN RESA
REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY
711 ST. JOSEPH AVENUE • BERRIEN SPRINGS, MI 49103-1583
PHONE: 269-471-7725 • FAX: 269-471-2941 • WWW.BERRIENRESA.ORG

August 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area. This will enable our institution to benefit from reliable broadband connections in our service area. We anticipate that this will result in an increase in the delivery of online educational services that will improve learning and school operations.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Berrien Regional Education Service Agency (Berrien RESA) is pleased to continue a relationship that is beneficial to Berrien RESA and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Siegel, Superintendent
Berrien Regional Education Service Agency

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Office of Information Technology

August 2, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical high-speed Broadband Services to the Western Michigan University Southwest campus. Located just outside Benton Harbor, Berrien County, Michigan, the Southwest campus offers graduate and undergraduate programs in a broad range of disciplines. The proposed network initiative will permit WMU to enhance its programs at the Southwest campus by:

1. providing full integration of information technology resources between the Southwest campus and the main campus in Kalamazoo,
2. enabling high-speed multimedia exchange between campuses to facilitate distance and collaborative learning, and
3. facilitating greater access to the faculty and research resources of WMU for an underserved and economically disadvantaged community.

In addition, WMU is committed to providing expanded access to university information resources, including the internet, for residents of Benton Harbor, a city that has long endured the worst of Michigan's economic adversity.

We anticipate the proposed broadband initiative will result in more opportunities for residents of the Berrien County area to pursue baccalaureate and graduate degrees, improving their employment prospects, and creating a better-educated workforce for the region. Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Western Michigan University is pleased to continue a relationship that is beneficial to our students and communities, and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

James A. Gilchrist

James A. Gilchrist, Ph.D.
Vice Provost and Chief Information Officer
Western Michigan University
james.gilchrist@wmich.edu
(269) 387-5430

University Computer Center
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5206
PHONE: (269) 387-5430
FAX: (269) 387-5473

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Office of Information Technology

August 2, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical high-speed Broadband Services to the South Haven campus of Lake Michigan College in Van Buren County, Michigan. Western Michigan University has longstanding partnerships with Lake Michigan College, providing integration of LMC curricula with WMU degree programs. The proposed broadband initiative would allow WMU and LMC to further develop their partnership through an expanded information network, including:

1. linking information technology resources between the South Haven campus, LMC's Benton Harbor campus, and WMU's main campus in Kalamazoo,
2. enabling high-speed multimedia exchange between campuses to facilitate distance and collaborative learning, and
3. facilitating greater access to the faculty and research resources of WMU for an underserved community.

We anticipate the proposed broadband initiative will result in more opportunities for area residents to pursue baccalaureate and graduate degrees, improving their employment prospects, and creating a better-educated workforce for the region. Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Western Michigan University is pleased to continue a relationship that is beneficial to our students, to our partners at Lake Michigan College, to the community of South Haven, and to Merit Network, Inc.

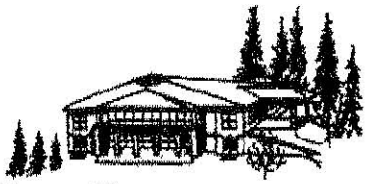
Sincerely,

James A. Gilchrist

James A. Gilchrist, Ph.D.
Vice Provost and Chief Information Officer
Western Michigan University
james.gilchrist@wmich.edu
(269) 387-5430

University Computer Center
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5206
PHONE: (269) 387-5430
FAX: (269) 387-5473

Q-41 Attachment: Government and Other Key Partnerships



Fennville District Library

400 W. Main Street PO Box 1130 Fennville, MI 49408 Ph.269-561-5050 Fax 269-561-5251 www.fennvillelibrary.org

Bob VandeVusse, Director

August 4, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the Fennville District Library in Fennville, Michigan (Allegan County). This will enable our institution to better meet the information needs and services of our patrons in the greater Fennville area. This will be particularly helpful in the area of employment searches, as we currently have difficulty meeting the demand for access to computers for those seeking employment.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Writing on behalf of the library, I am pleased to engage in a relationship that is beneficial to the Fennville District Library and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Bob VandeVusse, Director
Fennville District Library
269.561.5050
fenbv@llcoop.org

OTTAWA AREA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BUILDING
13565 Port Sheldon Street
Holland, MI 49424
(616) 738-8940
(877) 702-8600
FAX (616) 738-8946
www.oaisd.org

August 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District in Holland, MI in Ottawa and Allegan counties. This will enable our institution to enhance services on the Ottawa Area Wide Area Network which services 11 public school districts, several private schools, and auxiliary educational services such as the Outdoor Discovery Center. Through this effort, collaborative projects such as data warehousing, backup and disaster recovery, online learning initiatives, common financial and administrative systems and many other projects will be enhanced. Additionally, this project will enhance our interconnectivity with neighboring counties to create opportunities for collaborative projects. Immediately, we anticipate that this will also provide for creation or maintenance of several jobs during the build-out phase.

Ottawa Area Intermediate School District is pleased continue a relationship that is beneficial to Ottawa Area ISD and to Merit Network, Inc. Over its 40 year history, Merit has demonstrated its commitment to serving the needs of Michigan's educational community and these funds will help Merit to even better meet the needs of unserved and underserved areas throughout Michigan. This is greatly needed as it allows K-12 service agencies such as Ottawa Area ISD to extend their service offerings into communities that simply do not have the tax base or critical mass of students and/or staff to afford desperately needed services such as data analysis, curriculum consultation, and professional development. With the proposed development of the network, these services will be able to be equitably extended across the state without increasing delivery costs.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Rohwer
Ottawa Area Intermediate School District
mrohwer@oaisd.org
616-796-1450

Mission Statement:
We provide and enrich educational opportunities for students, schools and communities

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Office of Information Technology

August 2, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical high-speed Broadband Services to the Western Michigan University Muskegon campus in Muskegon County, Michigan. The WMU Muskegon campus offers graduate and undergraduate programs in a broad range of disciplines. The proposed network initiative will permit WMU to enhance its programs at the Muskegon campus by:

1. providing full integration of information technology resources between the Muskegon campus and the main campus in Kalamazoo,
2. enabling high-speed multimedia exchange between campuses to facilitate distance and collaborative learning, and
3. facilitating greater access to the faculty and research resources of WMU for an underserved and economically disadvantaged community.

We anticipate the proposed broadband initiative will result in more opportunities for residents of the Muskegon area to pursue baccalaureate and graduate degrees, improving their employment prospects, and creating a better-educated workforce for the region. Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Western Michigan University is pleased to continue a relationship that is beneficial to our students and communities, and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

James A. Gilchrist

James A. Gilchrist, Ph.D.
Vice Provost and Chief Information Officer
Western Michigan University
james.gilchrist@wmich.edu
(269) 387-5430

University Computer Center
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5206
PHONE: (269) 387-5430
FAX: (269) 387-5473

Q-41 Attachment: Government and Other Key Partnerships

VILLAGE OF PENTWATER

ON PENTWATER LAKE AND LAKE MICHIGAN
327 South Hancock Street-P.O. Box 622-Pentwater, Michigan 49449
(231) 869-8301 - FAX (231) 869-5120
E-mail: villpent@charterinternet.com Website: www.pentwatervillage.org

August 4, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as our school and industries. This will enable our community to flourish and expand with the help of technology. We anticipate that this will result in sustainability and growth within our community.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Village of Pentwater is pleased to engage in a relationship that is beneficial to our community and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Jim Miller

Jim Miller, Manager
Village of Pentwater
villpenmtmgr@charterinternet.com
(231) 869-8301

MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL™

LARRY EMIG
Chairperson, Local Elected Officials
SHERI THOMPSON
Chairperson, Workforce Development Board
PAUL J. GRIFFITH
Executive Director

www.michworkswc.org • 231.796.4891 • Fax: 231.796.8316 • Big Rapids, Michigan 49307 • 110 Elm Street

August 13, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch, President & CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Mr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network, Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

Michigan Works! West Central administers and contracts for the operation of federal and state funded employment and training programs under the Workforce Investment Act, American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act, Welfare Reform programs including JET (Jobs, Education & Training – formerly Work First) and Food Assistance Employment & Training, and the public Employment Service for a five county area which includes Lake & Mason counties. A recent addition is the state Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) for a nine county area, which also includes Lake & Mason counties.

A significant portion of the services provided require high speed internet access – from job seekers and employers using the Michigan Talent Bank as part of the public Employment Service, which currently contains over 1 million resumes of Michigan job seekers which Michigan employers have access to, to customers participating in assessment or basic skills training, using ACT's WorkKeys tests for assessment, including the new Michigan National Career Readiness Certificate. For those who test "low" or want to improve their WorkKeys scores, a licensed product called KeyTrain is available as an online teaching tool, however, it requires high speed connectivity. So while all five of West Central's Service Centers provide high speed connectivity, individuals could be gaining access to their account at home whenever they wish, IF they had access to high speed connectivity, which is not prevalent in rural Lake & Mason counties.

Finally, as an agency that is actively involved with economic development activity, one question that is always asked when working with prospects, is the availability of broadband access.

Again, Michigan Works! West Central fully supports Merit's application to bring broadband to untapped rural areas of Michigan.

Sincerely,
[SIGNED]
Paul J. Griffith
Executive Director

West Shore Community College

3000 NORTH STILES ROAD
P.O. BOX 277
SCOTTVILLE, MICHIGAN 49454-0277
231/845-6211
800/848-9722
www.westshore.edu

August 5, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as West Shore Community College in Scottville (Mason County), Mason Lake Oceana Intermediate School District in Ludington (serving Mason, Lake & Oceana Counties), Memorial Medical Center in Ludington (Mason County). West Michigan Community Mental Health in Ludington (Mason County), Mason County District Library in both Ludington & Scottville (Mason County), Memorial Family Care Center in Hart (Oceana County). This will enable our institution and others in our area to purchase adequate bandwidth at an affordable price. We anticipate that this will result in a more affordable way to offer college credit classes via interactive television to our local high schools for dual enrollment opportunities without travel expenses. Because of our rural location, access to adequate bandwidth is required and currently we have only one, very expensive option available. Many of our classes are recorded and made available to students via the Internet for review and without broadband this service is impossible. Having access to affordable bandwidth will also help attract new businesses and entrepreneurs to our area.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Sincerely,

Patti Davidson

Patti Davidson
Director of Information Technology and Distance Learning
West Shore Community College
pldavidson@westshore.edu
231.843.5830

LAKE COUNTY

Date August 13, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as our Township Clerks, Treasurers and Supervisors in, and close proximity to, Luther, Lake County, Michigan. This will enable our townships to be best served by the State of Michigan for all future Elections. We anticipate that this will result in an overall benefit to all of our constituents.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

I, as the Lake County Clerk/Register of Deeds/CFO am pleased to engage in a relationship that is beneficial to Luther, Michigan and to Lake County and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Shelly Myers
Lake County Clerk/Register/CFO
Clerk@co.lake.mi.us
231-745-2725

MICHIGAN WORKS! WEST CENTRAL™

LARRY EMIG
Chairperson, Local Elected Officials
SHERI THOMPSON
Chairperson, Workforce Development Board
PAUL J. GRIFFITH
Executive Director

www.michworkswc.org • 231.796.4891 • Fax: 231.796.8316 • Big Rapids, Michigan 49307 • 110 Elm Street

August 13, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch, President & CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Mr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network, Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

Michigan Works! West Central administers and contracts for the operation of federal and state funded employment and training programs under the Workforce Investment Act, American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act, Welfare Reform programs including JET (Jobs, Education & Training – formerly Work First) and Food Assistance Employment & Training, and the public Employment Service for a five county area which includes Lake & Mason counties. A recent addition is the state Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) for a nine county area, which also includes Lake & Mason counties.

A significant portion of the services provided require high speed internet access – from job seekers and employers using the Michigan Talent Bank as part of the public Employment Service, which currently contains over 1 million resumes of Michigan job seekers which Michigan employers have access to, to customers participating in assessment or basic skills training, using ACT's WorkKeys tests for assessment, including the new Michigan National Career Readiness Certificate. For those who test "low" or want to improve their WorkKeys scores, a licensed product called KeyTrain is available as an online teaching tool, however, it requires high speed connectivity. So while all five of West Central's Service Centers provide high speed connectivity, individuals could be gaining access to their account at home whenever they wish, IF they had access to high speed connectivity, which is not prevalent in rural Lake & Mason counties.

Finally, as an agency that is actively involved with economic development activity, one question that is always asked when working with prospects, is the availability of broadband access.

Again, Michigan Works! West Central fully supports Merit's application to bring broadband to untapped rural areas of Michigan.

Sincerely,
[SIGNED]
Paul J. Griffith
Executive Director

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

Let Our Resources Work For You!
• Employment • Business • Community

Chair: Larry C. Inman
Workforce Development Board Chair: David R. Adams
CEO: Elaine Wood

August 4, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing on behalf of the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will cost-effectively support critical economic development efforts in our rural service area comprising the ten counties of northwest lower Michigan. As you know, broadband Internet access has become a key operational component of practically any business and its availability at a reasonable cost has become one facet of corporate location decisions. We have, in northwest lower Michigan, many rural communities requiring upgraded broadband availability to effectively compete for those companies and their resulting jobs.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout Michigan positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities in our area and throughout Michigan.

The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments has been a proud member and supporter of Merit for the last eighteen years. In that time we have aided Merit's efforts to connect our public schools and other institutions to the Internet where possible. We continue that commitment by supporting Merit's proposed program under the ARRA.

Sincerely,

Charlene Schlueter
Associate Director for Information Services

Antrim • Benzie • Charlevoix • Emmet • Grand Traverse • Kalkaska • Leelanau • Manistee • Missaukee • Wexford
P. O. Box 506 • Traverse City, MI 49685-0506 • Phone (231) 929-5000 • Fax (231) 929-5012 www.nwm.org

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and service are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Michigan Relay Center callers use 711 or 1-800-649-3777.

Benzie Shores District Library
630 Main Street
Frankfort, Michigan 49635-0631
Phone/ Fax: (231) 352-4671
www.benzieshoreslibrary.org

July 27, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the Benzie Shores District Library in Frankfort. This will enable our institution to establish broadband communication. We anticipate that this will result in better library service.

Merit's over 40 year history of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Benzie Shores District Library is pleased to once again have a relationship that is beneficial to BSDL and to Merit Network, Inc.

Best regards,

Virginia Hollister Freeman

Virginia Hollister Freeman, Secretary
Benzie Shores District Library Board of Trustees

CITY OF FRANKFORT

OFFICE OF THE CITY SUPERINTENDENT
412 Main Street • P.O. Box 351
Frankfort, Michigan 49635-0351
Phone: (231) 352-7117
Fax: (231) 352-7100

August 10, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Re: Benzie County ARRA Broadband Stimulus Program Application

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital, The Maples Medical Care Facility, Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools and the City of Frankfort community in northern Michigan.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The City of Frankfort is pleased to support submission of this grant application and establish a relationship that will enhance the social and economic wellbeing of Benzie County and the City of Frankfort and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Joshua J. Mills
City Superintendent

Northwest Michigan Community Health Agency

HEALTH DEPARTMENT of Northwest Michigan

Administrative Office
220 W. Garfield Ave.
Charlevoix, MI 49720
231 547 6523
231 547 6238 - fax

209 Portage Dr.
Bellaire, MI 49615
231 533 8670
231 533 8450 - fax

205 Grove St.
Mancelona, MI 49659
231 587 5052
231 587 5313 - fax

3434 Harbor-Petoskey
Suite A
Harbor Springs, MI
49740
231 347 6014
231 347 2861 - fax

95 Livingston Blvd.
Gaylord, MI 49735
989 732 1794
989 732 3285 - fax

Dental Clinics North
Administrative Office
220 W. Garfield Ave.
Charlevoix, MI 49720
231 547 6523
231 547 6238 - fax

Hospice of Northwest Michigan
P. O. Box 233
Boyne City, MI 49712
800 551 4140
231 547 1164 - fax

Northern Michigan Regional Lab
95 Livingston Blvd.
Suite D
Gaylord, MI 49735
989 732 1794
989 732 3285 - fax

www.nwhealth.org

August 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as Antrim, Emmet, Charlevoix, and Otsego counties. This will enable our institution to better participate in Health Information Exchange networks in our region. We anticipate that this will result in improved health care results for the population of Michigan.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Northwest Michigan Community Health Agency is interested in the potential to develop a relationship that is beneficial to both our organization and Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Dan Powers
I.T. Manager
Northwest Michigan Community Health Agency
220 W. Garfield
Charlevoix, MI 49720
dan@nwhealth.org
231-547-6523

TRAVERSE AREA DISTRICT
LIBRARY

2009 August 5

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Dr., Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Dear Dr. Welch:

Though many of the major institutions in this part of Michigan are fairly well covered by broadband access, you don't need to travel very far to find only sporadic pockets of high speed access or none at all. The middle mile and especially the last mile connections have always been a financial obstacle to distributing access in this essentially rural area.

I applaud Merit's willingness to take on the task of making access more accessible to the many underserved areas in the region through its Broadband Stimulus Strategy.

Best of luck in your ARRA application.

Sincerely,

Michael McGuire, Director

610 Woodmere Avenue
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 932-8500 phone
(231) 932-8578 fax
tadl.tcnet.org

NORTH COUNTRY
COMMUNITY
MENTAL HEALTH

One MacDonald
Drive, Suite A
Petoskey, MI
49770

231.347.7890
TTY: Dial 711
Fax: 231.347.9605

August 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I'm sending this letter in support of Merit Network's application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program under the American recovery and Reinvestment Act Stimulus Program. As I understand it, Merit is proposing to complete its fiber backbone in Michigan.

As a behavioral health care provider in Michigan's community mental health system, I can tell you that this fiber backbone is of extreme importance to us. North Country CMH administers and provides services to six counties at the tip of the mitt and administers an affiliation of three mental health boards covering the thirteen counties at the tip of the mitt. From VoIP to video-conferencing to our electronic medical record to necessary billing and reporting to the Department of Community Health, adequate bandwidth is crucial to our organization.

We have worked with Merit as our internet provider for a long time and greatly appreciate the excellent and stable service we receive. We realize that Merit has a lengthy history of providing advanced networking services throughout the State. Merit's participation in this project is a tremendous asset to the effort.

The provision of broadband internet services to our rural northern Michigan area will greatly enhance the quality of life here. Please know that we support your effort and stand willing to work with you in its completion.

Sincerely,

Alexis Kaczynski
Director

Serving Antrim,
Charlevoix,
Cheboygan,
Emmet,
Kalkaska, and
Otsego Counties

August 3, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as the City of Charlevoix, the Charlevoix Public Schools and the Charlevoix Public Library. This will enable our institution to better serve the community by providing broadband access to the rural areas in our district. We anticipate that this will result in the ability for our patrons to access our resources from home and assist in their job hunt, job applications, and overall ability to communicate via the internet.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of un-served and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Charlevoix Public Library is pleased to develop a relationship that is beneficial to all citizens in the Charlevoix Library district and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Valerie Meyerson, Library Director
val@charlevoixlibrary.org
231-237-7360

Charlevoix Public Schools

Learning Success for All

August 5, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as Charlevoix Public Schools, Charlevoix-Emmett Intermediate School District and the City of Charlevoix in Charlevoix and Charlevoix County. This will enable our institution to collaborate and share resources with institutions on a global basis. We anticipate that this will result in enhanced educational opportunities, more efficient use of resources, increased economic development and job growth.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

Charlevoix Public Schools is pleased to develop a relationship that is beneficial to Charlevoix Public Schools and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Scott Mays

Scott Mays
Technology Coordinator
Charlevoix Public Schools
smays@rayder.net
231-547-3240

Charlevoix Public Schools
Administrative Office
104 E. St. Mary's Drive
Charlevoix, MI 49720
231.547.3200 p
231.547.0556 f

Charlevoix Elementary School
13513 Division Street
Charlevoix, MI 49720
231.547.3215 p
231.547.3150 f

Charlevoix Middle School
108 E. Garfield Street
Charlevoix, MI 49720
231.547.3206 p
231.547.3244 f

Charlevoix High School
05200 Marion Center Road
Charlevoix, MI 49720
231.547.3222 p
231.547.3245 f

www.rayder.net

North Central MICHIGAN COLLEGE
1515 HOWARD STREET • PETOSKEY, MI 49770 • 231-348-6600

August 11, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing, on behalf of North Central Michigan College, a State of Michigan community college, to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to our institution in helping us reach our regional area K-12 schools, as well as our North Central Michigan College off-campus centers in Gaylord (37 miles) and Cheboygan, Michigan (33 miles). This will also enable our institution to work directly with the Gaylord University Center, in conjunction with our academic degree and certificate programs with Central Michigan University, Lake Superior State University, Spring Arbor University, and Michigan State University.

Additionally, we anticipate that this long/back haul infrastructure will result in creating lower bandwidth costs for middle mile broadband providers such as the Northern Michigan Broadband Cooperative, as well as local last mile Internet service providers within our region.

Too, North Central, through its well-known Institute for Business and Industry Training (IBIT), is the regional leader in providing training and re-training for businesses, manufacturers, successful start-up entrepreneurs, and other professionals in Northern Lower Michigan and the Eastern Upper Peninsula. The regional omnipresence of Merit's backbone infrastructure will highly benefit the economic develop within these areas of the State.

Merit's over 40 year heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

North Central Michigan College is pleased to develop, engage in, or continue our long time relationship within the region to help provide desperately-needed economic development. This is a very significant relationship that is beneficial to North Central and to Merit Network, Inc. *We urge your funding of this relationship.*

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Grandstaff
Associate Dean
Academic and Administrative Technologies
North Central Michigan College
egrandstaff@ncmich.edu
(231) 348-6664

The University of Michigan Biological Station

4 August 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program. We are located in a remote area of Emmet and Cheboygan counties in northern Michigan and broadband access is critical to our mission of education, research, and outreach. Improved broadband access is necessary for continuing and improving our programs.

We are one of the largest inland biological field stations in the US. We offer a diversity of undergraduate and graduate courses in the spring and summer, and we have researchers from institutions across the US and around the world. Approximately 200 residents from more than 40 universities and research institutions are conducting research at our field station this year (2009) in the biological, ecological, atmospheric, and archaeological sciences. Granting agencies include DOE, NSF, NOAA, USF&WS, Michigan Natural Features Inventory, US Navy-NUWC, DARPA, Detroit Zoo (and many others). The total amount of grant monies received by investigators working here is approximately $800,000. We employ 18 permanent people and 40 seasonal people. Our annual budget is approximately $3,000,000, with much of it spent in northern Michigan to support our varied operations. Over 2800 publications have resulted from investigations based at our field station, and approximately 9000 students have taken courses here and gone on to careers all over the country.

Broadband internet access is crucial to all of these research and teaching efforts. Currently we lease 2 T1 circuits and 1 wireless link to Merit's node in Petoskey. Our users peg out this bandwidth nightly during summer, impeding our overall research and teaching effectiveness. For instance, the Ameriflux network research towers here send up to 1 gigabyte of data each night to Ohio State U. for processing. When 200-300 people are pursuing their research and educational interests every day they need bandwidth.

A fiber link with faster switches and routers would ensure that our field station's operations remain at the forefront of field-based biological and environmental research. It will enhance training the next generation of field researchers in the environmental sciences. We look forward to partnering with you and your Merit, Inc. colleagues as you move forward to provide broadband internet access to our northern Michigan region.

Sincerely,

Knute Nadelhoffer
Director, Univ. of Michigan Biological Station

Ann Arbor Campus:
2541 Chemistry Bldg.
930 N. University Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1048
Phone: (734) 763-4461
Fax: (734) 647-1055

Douglas Lake Campus:
9133 Biological Rd.
Pellston, MI 49769-9133
Phone: (231) 539-8408
Fax: (231) 539-8785

www.lsa.umich.edu/umbs

HILLMAN, FLETCHER POND, THUNDER BAY VISITOR'S BUREAU
27800 M-32, P.O. Box 157
HILLMAN, MI 49746

August 12, 2009

Mr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch;

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc's application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Stimulus Program.

The Village of Hillman is small, rural and very low income. We badly need access to high speed Internet for education and business as well as non-profits. The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions – our community owned medical clinic, library, schools, churches and regional governmental agencies. These entities will then be able to expand programs, reduce costs and interact with each other more effectively. Perhaps more importantly, from my perspective, it will help create a backbone from which other for profit and non-profit providers will be able to serve individual homes and businesses at AFFORDABLE rates with fiber optic service.

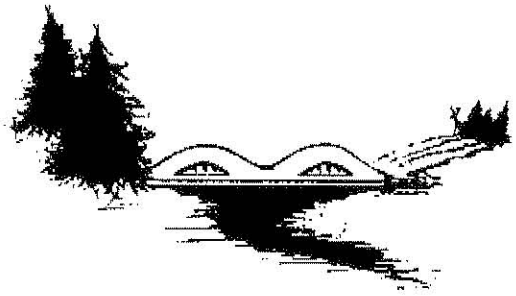
We need to do a better job educating and preparing our students for life in the electronic age. There are people who vacation here currently how would consider operating their business from our area if the had reliable access to secure high speed Internet. We would like to be able to retain young people here with better paying higher tech jobs.

Our "Visitor's Bureau" is a 1 ½ year old non-profit entity that represents several small resorts and lodging properties in the Hillman area. We have a very limited budget and need to rely on "social networking" and other Internet marketing to do our promotional work. Employment is down by over 30% in our lodging properties – over 25 jobs in a Village of about 700 people. The recent national recession has actually been a multi-year depression in Michigan. We have the highest unemployment statistic in our immediate area in the state with the highest rate nationally. We are working hard to prevent closure of several members which would result in over 50 additional job losses. We want to restore those lost jobs and we look forward to working with the Merit Network's fiber optic Internet network to help us do so. Call if you have questions -989-657-6996 or jack@ThunderBayGolf.com

Thank-you

Jack Matthias, Chairman Hillman, Fletcher Pond, Thunder Bay Visitor's Bureau

Q-41 Attachment: Government and Other Key Partnerships



Village of Hillman

PO Box 96
24220 Veterans Memorial Hwy
Hillman, MI 49746

PHONE: 989-742-4751 or 989-742-4641 FAX: 989-742-4947
TDD: 800-482-8254

August 11, 2009

Dr. Donald J. Welch
President and CEO
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

Dear Dr. Welch:

I am writing to express support for Merit Network Inc.'s application related to the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

The project you are proposing will extend critical Broadband Services to anchor institutions in our area, such as: Thunder Bay Community Health Services, Hillman/Atlanta, Montmorency County, Michigan, Montmorency County Public Library, Hillman, Atlanta, and Lewiston, Montmorency County, Michigan, and Hillman's Brush Creek Mill, The Village of Hillman, Montmorency County Michigan. This will enable our institutions to connect to other areas of the state, and nationwide, in their endeavor to provide quality services to the sick, elderly, and working people of our area. Our area has recently lost many good paying jobs due to the economic downturn and with gas prices as high as they are travel is limited to many elderly for good quality health care. Our clinic has begun building a new "state of the art" building which will house additional personnel and qualified doctors. The Montmorency County Libraries system will be able to provide additional computer training and networking opportunities to unemployed individuals in our area. The Brush Creek Mill has begun work to preserve the areas' history with plans for virtual tours being offered to schools nationwide. These are just a few of the many things of which Broadband technology can

provide to our area. We anticipate that this technology will result in additional jobs at the mill, clinic, and libraries, and increased tourism to our area.

Merit's over 40 years heritage of providing advanced networking services throughout the State positions Merit well to meet the needs of unserved and underserved communities throughout Michigan.

The Village of Hillman is pleased to engage in a longtime relationship that is beneficial to the Village of Hillman and to Merit Network, Inc.

Sincerely,

Brenda South

Brenda South
Village of Hillman Clerk