



February 17, 2010

The Honorable Larry Strickling  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

As Chancellor of the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH), I urge you to approve the statewide broadband proposal submitted by the University of New Hampshire to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program (BTOP) Round 2 program. I further assure you of the commitment of CCSNH to participate fully in this initiative and deploy our expertise and effort to ensure the success of the project. The Broadband network proposed in this grant application will play a major role in positioning the Community College System and the State of NH to meet the needs of our citizens for access to information, economic and learning resources.

CCSNH consists of seven community colleges that stretch from the seacoast and southern border of the state to the far northern border with Canada. The colleges are open access institutions, proud of their strong ties with their host communities and with the regions they serve. No other institution in the state offers a similar breadth of access to education and training. This access encompasses affordability, student support services, program array, flexibility of course delivery methods and scheduling, student composition, and geographic reach.

Enrollment at our institutions statewide has increased 72% over the last decade, with a 12% jump just last fall over the previous year. Enrollment in on-line courses at the community colleges has nearly doubled in the period 2007-2010. For a variety of reasons, growing numbers of people are looking to community colleges for job training, affordable and accessible educational pathways, and an array of opportunities. We understand and embrace our role in delivering the services our citizens need to thrive in a challenging economy.

As overall demand for community colleges increases, additional network bandwidth will be required to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of our growing student enrollments and the integrated needs of our communities. Additional bandwidth will be essential to our campuses in supporting and delivering courses which provide a path to


certificates, degrees and job training in high-demand fields, including programs that address national priorities like the STEM fields, green jobs, allied health, and teacher training.

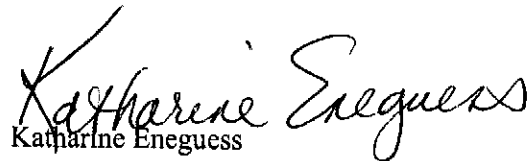
Significant disparity of opportunity exists within NH from one region to another. Due to insufficient bandwidth, large regions of New Hampshire are without the capacity to effectively access learning resources. These areas, not surprisingly, are also those where economic challenges are the more pronounced. CCSNH has made an effort to extend the borders of our campuses by offering online courses and by opening academic centers in the northern and rural western regions of New Hampshire where there is a need for our courses and job training. The Broadband network/middle mile solution proposed in this grant application will link the College campuses and the academic centers into one cohesive entity which will provide greater opportunity for the students and communities.

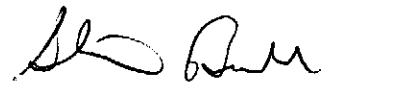
CCSNH has a long-standing good working relationship with the University System of New Hampshire and the state's private colleges and universities, and we look forward to working together to implement the plans described in this proposal.


I am joined in this letter of support by the Presidents of the seven Community Colleges in New Hampshire, whose signatures appear below.

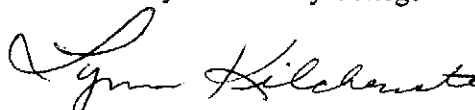
Sincerely,

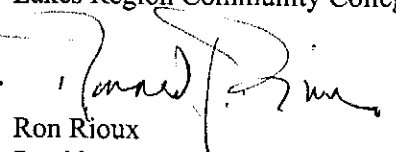
  
Dr. Richard A. Gustafson  
Chancellor


  
Katharine Eneguess  
President  
White Mountains Community College

  
Steven Budd  
President  
River Valley Community College

  
Dr. Mark Edelstein  
President  
Lakes Region Community College

  
Lynn Kilchenstein  
President  
NHTI-Concord's Community College

  
Ron Rioux  
President  
Manchester Community College

  
Lucille Jordan  
President  
Nashua Community College

  
Wildolfo Arvelo  
President  
Great Bay Community College