



February 18, 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:

We understand that a statewide broadband proposal, Network New Hampshire, is being submitted by the University of New Hampshire to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program (BTOP) Round 2 program.

The Granite State Distance Learning Network (GSDLN) is very supportive of this proposal, as access to broadband across the state of New Hampshire continues to be a significant challenge for us. GSDLN is a statewide consortium of over 30 public/private organizations dedicated to developing and implementing an affordable, high-speed telecommunications, video conferencing and distance education network throughout New Hampshire. Our primary mission is to facilitate and deliver distance learning, professional development, and community-based video conferencing opportunities across the state. Our efforts to provide access to affordable, advanced telecommunications resources to K-12 schools, post-secondary institutions, libraries, other local/regional public entities, hospitals and businesses are hampered by the lack of sufficient middle and last-mile connectivity in rural areas.

Just one example is the ongoing dialogue with our state government offices to bring telehealth and telejustice services to New Hampshire to provide better medical outcomes and increased public safety to our communities. The Network New Hampshire proposal being submitted in Round 2 would provide the conduit for us make these visions reality. We also believe that the middle mile infrastructure proposed in this Round 2 submission will lead to additional service offerings, facilitating rural economic development and job stimulation. The lack of dark fiber transport available for carriers is a primary cause of the limited availability of rural broadband services in New Hampshire.

For these reasons, we wholeheartedly support the Network New Hampshire proposal. If funded, we intend to utilize this broadband to bring services and opportunities to all of New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

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