August 12, 2009

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

Dear Dr. Strickling:

This letter serves as my formal endorsement and enthusiastic support of the Infrastructure to Broaden Economic Advancement and Mindshare in New Hampshire (I-BEAM-NH) Project. I-BEAM-NH addresses a number of compelling problems outlined in the New Hampshire Broadband Action Plan of 2008. Not only does the University System of New Hampshire recognize the need for broadband communication opportunities to exist throughout the state, but we share the common vision of the state partners that have articulated in this proposal the essence of the problem and the vision to have an impact. We delight in taking a leadership role on the management and technical components of this project for the betterment of research and education (R&E) networks, economic development, health care, transportation and public safety in the state.

I have worked closely with my department head counterparts in New Hampshire in leveraging the collective investments of the University of New Hampshire, Keene State College, Plymouth State University, Granite State College and Dartmouth College to improve and create a cyberinfrastructure for the State of New Hampshire.

One of the underlying themes of the University’s strategic planning surrounds the development of cyber-enabled teaching, research and service. The I-BEAM-NH vision will enhance and develop communications opportunities that have been difficult or impossible to perform without a robust cyberinfrastructure, especially in the unserved and underserved parts of our state in the North Country and the southwest. Further, President Mark Huddleston and the UNH campus, as well as Chancellor MacKay and the USNH leadership, have a strong commitment to maintaining our efforts in sustainability. Our connection to the state’s other research and teaching institutions of higher education will increase our opportunities to collaborate while minimizing our environmental impact and maximizing the benefits for our citizens.

In working with our statewide partners on this project, we are forging a future centered on the development of cyberinfrastructure. We at USNH not only commit our time and treasure to support this proposal, we will commit to support future infrastructure development in sustaining the new fiber network, thereby having a long-lasting impact on the State. This program has my strongest personal and institutional endorsement.

Sincerely,

Thomas L. Franke, Ph.D.
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