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

Re: Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, Broadband Initiatives Program

Dear Assistant Secretary Stickling:

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter in support of the State of New Hampshire’s application under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) and Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP). This comprehensive proposal is a blueprint for providing internet access and infrastructure to underserved citizens within the State of New Hampshire. The University of New Hampshire is the designated applicant for the State of New Hampshire and will serve as the entity of authority during the implementation phase.

Since 2000, the State has worked aggressively through its Telecommunications Advisory Board and key partners to increase deployment of broadband services throughout New Hampshire. We recognize that service in these areas is a right of access and opportunity, and that our efforts to support economic development are in large part dependent on our efforts to improve service. This proposal is the result of multi-stakeholder participation and communication, and incorporates the most critical areas of interest to NTIA such as:

a) Last Mile Deployment - Reaching the unserved and underserved areas of the State is an identified priority for Stimulus funding. There are key areas in New Hampshire’s southwestern and North Country regions that are still struggling to keep pace in terms of broadband deployment and accessibility, hampering their efforts to spur economic growth and business recruitment. Recently, the Department released a Request for Proposal designed to incentivize penetration in the needed areas of New Hampshire, primarily in the southwest and north.

b) Microwave Backbone - Several State agencies have build out plans for microwave/radio technology utilizing state lands and towers. The purpose of the proposed structures is to create a secure first responder and critical infrastructure backbone. This will allow timely statewide dissemination of critical data to public safety and infrastructure providers. Utilizing microwave and fiber, the backbone will create an open access (but secure) core ring network that will have redundant pathways to ensure continuity of service in the event of line or equipment failure.
c) Middle Mile Fiber –Multidisciplinary (Educational/ Telemedicine) - There is a need to create a fiber/cable/wireless loop structure that services higher institutions of learning, medical facilities (telemedicine), libraries, Smart Grid, intelligent transportation and others. On ramps and exit ramps will be utilized for projects reaching to the last mile.

e) Telecom Director Position - The State has created a Telecommunications Director position to work on the projects included in the proposal, and to engage public and private stakeholders in the broadband debate. This position is the embodiment of our commitment towards this process.

I believe the above projects are in keeping with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, but more importantly, the projects are interrelated and supportive of one another. Together they illustrate a broader picture as to New Hampshire’s vision of technology deployment – our belief that all should have access, and that such access is a critical driver of better education, improved health brought about by telemedicine, and a proactive approach to grow our economy.

I hope you will share my vision of broadband in New Hampshire, and that you will consider this proposal as a wise step toward making that vision a reality.

Sincerely,

John H. Lynch
Governor