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:

Broadband throughout New Hampshire is a critical need for the citizens of our state. Broadband services offer significant benefits for health care, information exchange and access, economic development and education. I am writing in 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. The University System of New Hampshire has been participating in the development of the plans described in the proposal and shares the vision embodied in it. We look forward to continuing to work with our colleagues in the state to realize that shared vision.

New Hampshire has a rich collection of natural resources. Yet, within our more remote locations a huge disadvantage exists when attracting and retaining business, faculty, skilled workers, researchers and students due to the lack of high-speed network connectivity with the rest of the state, region, and world. Once we are able to fully implement the I-BEAM-NH vision throughout New Hampshire and connect via the regional optical network designed for New Hampshire and the New England region, we will be on equal footing with neighboring states.

We will support this initiative by providing technical expertise for planning and implementation and by providing ongoing support for operations. Further, we will continue to offer thought leadership, as we have been doing through the planning and leadership committees led by the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). This proposal conveys the promise of collaborations and communications that are now not possible because of a lack of broadband bandwidth.
We believe that a modern cyberinfrastructure is critical to the future of New Hampshire. The network needs outlined in this proposal align with the direction of the State of New Hampshire, NTIA and RUS. I appreciate your positive consideration of this important proposal. If I can provide further evidence of my support for this grant proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Edward R. MacKay
Chancellor