

March 20, 2010

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 critical for the citizens of our state and for the success of our educational system. I am writing in support of the Network New Hampshire Now project (#4248). The project submitted to the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) addresses compelling problems outlined in the New Hampshire Broadband Action Plan of 2008. The University System of New Hampshire (USNH) has actively participated in the development of the proposal and shares the vision embodied in it. We look forward to continuing to work with our colleagues to realize that shared vision.

New Hampshire has rich natural resources and a long history of effective use of those resources. The State's continued economic development requires a strong cyberinfrastructure in order to maintain that tradition in the twenty-first century. Our Board of Trustees is committed to use of technology in our programs, and we have funded a project to increase rich media use in USNH courses. Our institutions have implemented on-line and hybrid programs to extend access to our services, but we are hampered by the inadequate broadband connectivity throughout the state. In addition to large areas that lack connectivity, much of the state suffers from insufficient competition to make broadband both available and affordable.

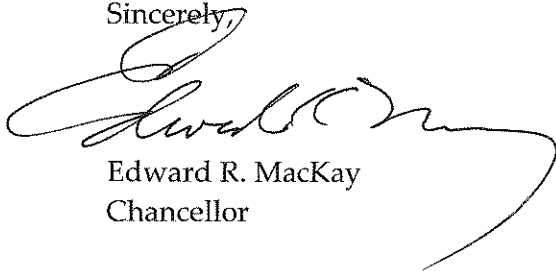
We welcome the BTOP round two emphasis on middle mile connectivity of anchor institutions. Increasingly, the role of the University System involves collaboration among our institutions and other anchor institutions. USNH and the Community College System of New Hampshire have developed a strong collaboration in order to provide a pathway to degree completion. Unfortunately, bandwidth limitations force us to duplicate services where we might otherwise gain efficiencies. For example, with adequate cyberinfrastructure, expensive high tech scientific

equipment could be shared and business support systems could be consolidated. Research is increasingly conducted by multi-institutional teams.

In support of this critical project, the University System of New Hampshire commits five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in cash, as well as an in-kind contribution of leadership time to be invested by Dr. Thomas Franke, USNH CIO, to the project management team. We will continue to offer technical and visionary support to assure the sustainability of the project.

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 New Hampshire, NTIA and the FCC's recently released National Broadband Plan. 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. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward R. MacKay", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Edward R. MacKay
Chancellor