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March 19, 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:

On behalf of Franklin Pierce University, I wish to express our commitment to the statewide broadband proposal submitted by the University of New Hampshire to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program (BTOP) Round 2 program. Franklin Pierce University is located in the rural town of Rindge in southwest New Hampshire. As with many towns in the Monadnock Region, Rindge is a town with very limited access to broadband. It is a town without DSL services from the local CLEC and without an extensive cable television network. The University's library serves as a hub for accessing the internet for many residents in this region. In addition, as a relatively high point in southwest New Hampshire, the rooftop of our library provides a space for a cellular antenna from US Cellular and, in the near future, local broadband wireless from Radius North. However, the amount of broadband available in the local telephone central office limits the economic development in the region. The cost of broadband, the per-mile, last-mile charge, is prohibitive, restricting the ability of the University to purchase the access required for students in a higher education environment.

Our university students require the internet to broadly research topics within their coursework. This research often results in multimedia content (streaming video, museum photography, biographical video content, global music, etc.) which consumes far more broadband than the text streaming of ten to twenty years ago. The rural location of our University limits access to the wealth of information in archives and museums available to students in urban and suburban areas. The price we pay for broadband impacts our ability to fund other much-needed educational initiatives. We are impacted directly by lack of available connectivity and by the high cost of connectivity due to insufficient supply and inadequate price competition in New Hampshire.

Franklin Pierce University is also a provider of on-line education of undergraduate and graduate programs. As we reach out to areas of New Hampshire for which higher educational opportunities are few and far between, we must reduce our on-line content to be able to



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meet the wide-spread access minimum of a 56k modem. Where content could be vibrant and immediately interactive and engaging for the student, it often must take the form of content delivered in the 1990s in order to be received at all. This broadband divide creates a never ending cycle - an untrained workforce prevents business growth, lack of economic development encourages families to move to more densely populated areas, a low density population is unable to support the business model of telecommunication companies in the for-profit sector, and lack of broadband limits both educational and economic development growth. The Network New Hampshire Project being proposed by the statewide partner group led by the University of New Hampshire BTOP funding in Round Two will go a long way towards bridging the divide and interrupting the cycle, creating opportunity throughout New Hampshire.

In anticipation of this project, Franklin Pierce University commits co-location facilities for wireless businesses in order to facilitate last-mile access to broadband from their facilities in Rindge, NH with a fair market value of \$30,000 annually as in-kind for the project and an expansion of broadband internet access for the University and the community at \$75,000 cash match annually.

For these reasons, we at Franklin Pierce University are enthusiastically committed to New Hampshire's efforts at constructing the Network New Hampshire Project. We encourage the funding and construction of this project, and we look forward to being a customer of the finished network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carole D. Monroe".

Carole D. Monroe
Chief Information Officer
Vice President for Enrollment Services
Franklin Pierce University
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