

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 5, 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:

We are writing in support of the Broadband Infrastructure grant application (Broadband Technology Opportunities Program; CDFA# 11.557) submitted by the University of New Hampshire as application #4248 to improve broadband service and lay the foundation for economic growth and job creation across our state. This proposal represents a comprehensive statewide collaboration between broadband advocates and economic development and education leaders and we are pleased to support their efforts.

Currently, New Hampshire ranks in the bottom tier of states in broadband capacity and capability. Ninety percent of households in our state access the Internet by methods that do not meet broadband speed definitions as defined by the Federal Communications Commission. The statewide broadband proposal titled Network New Hampshire Now (NNHN) will address the most critical barriers to the deployment of broadband throughout the state. The centerpiece of the proposal is the extension of existing fiber optic network capability in the state with middle mile fiber optic networks into rural areas of New Hampshire, a microwave broadband wireless network for public safety, and a set of three last mile fiber optic network areas for rural unserved and underserved communities.

This project is designed to maximize benefit to residents, institutions and businesses across New Hampshire. More than 600,000 New Hampshire residents will have middle mile network access brought to their communities to allow commercial carriers to connect last mile homes and businesses to broadband using the middle mile network. Several carriers worked closely with the University to develop the proposal and are committed to extending service to unserved and underserved communities.

The middle mile fiber network will expand services at community anchor institutions in all 10 New Hampshire counties by delivering next generation broadband. These institutions include hospitals and healthcare institutions, the New Hampshire State Police, County Sheriff, and Public Safety Access Point locations, community and state libraries, higher education campuses, public television transmitter and broadcast sites and the state's mountain-top tower facilities. This network will improve public safety and communications, support education and healthcare delivery and offer the opportunity for expanded mobile broadband access to commercial providers.

This grant is an opportunity to advance several recommendations of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) National Broadband Plan released on March 16, 2010. The increased technological capacity of the hospitals and other healthcare institutions affected will enable them to modernize their practices in line with the vision of the FCC. The doors to healthcare information technology (HIT)

functions such as electronic record keeping, video conferencing/consultation/monitoring, and more would be cast open.

With regards to strengthening public safety, the recommendation to create a nationwide interoperable public safety wireless broadband communications network would advance significantly with the installation of microwave wireless network equipment covering nearly 4,000 square miles of New Hampshire. The expanded network will also provide enormous opportunities for citizens of unserved and underserved areas to further their education via distance learning, online courses, and other training programs.

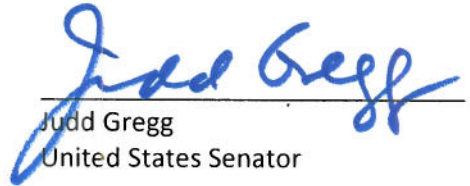
It is abundantly clear to us that the Network New Hampshire Now project is firmly in line with the needs and aspirations both for our state, and the nation. Many of the communities affected by NNHN have been deeply impacted by the economic recession, and this project will help lay the foundation for economic recovery. Businesses cannot grow and new businesses do not take root in communities without broadband connectivity. This grant will open all areas of our state to the businesses and jobs of our 21st century economy.

We, the New Hampshire congressional delegation, strongly support the University of New Hampshire's application and urge your careful consideration of this critically important project. Please do not hesitate to contact any of us about this application. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Firestone in Senator Shaheen's office at 202-224-6299.

Sincerely,



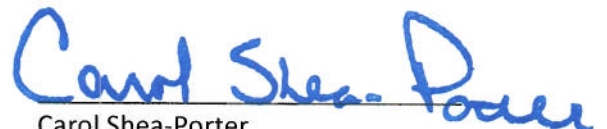
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Judd Gregg
United States Senator



Paul Hodes
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress

Cc: Anthony Wilhelm, Deputy Associate Administrator
James V. Wasilewski, Director, Office of Congressional Affairs
Sara W. Morris, Office of Congressional Affairs