Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Rebecca Cameron Valcq, Chairperson
Ellen Nowak, Commissioner
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September 26, 2022

To: Sarah Bleau, Middle Mile Director
Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20230
Phone: (202) 482-2048 Email: middlemile@ntia.gov

Re: Letter of Support for Application to National Telecommunications and Information Administration Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program

The Wisconsin Broadband Office (WBO) in the Division of Digital Access, Consumer and Environmental Affairs of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin supports Dairyland Power Cooperative's application for a grant through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program, administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Dairyland Power Cooperative has coordinated and consulted with the WBO, and has demonstrated that its proposed project is in alignment with the State's broadband goals.

Wisconsin's State Broadband Plan includes robust middle mile infrastructure throughout the state to ensure network resiliency and sufficiently robust services necessary to support communities and local economies. Middle mile infrastructure not only provides direct connections to anchor institutions and businesses who provide important services, it also facilitates the expansion of accessible and affordable last mile connections to households, a key priority in Wisconsin's State Broadband Plan.

Dairyland Power Cooperative's proposal to build 240 miles of fiber for a middle mile network including through portions of Barron, Burnett, Polk, and Washburn Counties aligns with Wisconsin's broadband plan because it would offer open access to the middle mile infrastructure. Dairyland Power Cooperative would also prioritize middle mile fiber use by its member cooperatives and their affiliates that are last mile internet service providers in the area.

For these reasons, the WBO fully supports Dairyland Power Cooperative's Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant application. Please contact me directly with any comments, questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kristy Nieto, Administrator
Division of Digital Access, Consumer and Environmental Affairs
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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