AMY KLOBUCHAR
MINNESOTA

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 21, 2022

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
United States Secretary of Commerce
United States Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Dairyland Power Cooperative, Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

I write in support of Dairyland Power Cooperative's application for funding through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program. If awarded, funding would support the Tri-State Fiber Deployment Project, which would expand high-speed internet to underserved areas in southeast Minnesota, northern Iowa, and western Wisconsin.

Headquartered in La Crosse, Wisconsin; Dairyland Power Cooperative is a member-owned electric cooperative that serves countless communities across southeast Minnesota, northern Iowa, and western Wisconsin. For nearly 80 years, Dairyland Power Cooperative has been the primary energy provider for significant portions of rural Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin, serving over half a million homes, farms, and businesses in the region. However, broadband internet access is scarce across several regions in rural Minnesota and the services Dairyland Power Cooperative provides are vital across their entire service region.

Funding from the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program would support Dairyland Power Cooperative's efforts to expand high-speed internet access to underserved communities within its service region. The expansion would help provide high-speed internet to tens of thousands of additional residents, farms, and businesses across the tristate region by retrofitting and upgrading the current fiber system to boost efficiency and reliability for their customers. Increased access to high-speed internet in the region would not only bolster small businesses and farms in the midst of the pandemic, but it would also support the capacity for distance learning in rural communities. As a member of the Senate Broadband Caucus, I understand the importance of high-speed internet access in rural communities and I believe this project would greatly benefit Minnesota communities.

Again, I support Dairyland Power Cooperative's application for funding through the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program. If you have any questions, please contact Rommel Lee in my Minnesota office at (612) 727-5220 or by email at Rommel_Lee@Klobuchar.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator