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COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
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September 6, 2022

Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear National Telecommunication and Information Administration,

This letter is being written to express our support of Dairyland Power Cooperative's (DPC) Tri-State Fiber Deployment Project; a multifaceted endeavor that will bring about much needed middle mile infrastructure to predominately rural communities in south-east Minnesota, northern Iowa, south-west Wisconsin, and northwest Wisconsin through the NTIA's Middle Mile Grant Program.

MiEnergy Cooperative's service territory is in SE Minnesota and NE Iowa. The territory is very rural, and we average four members per mile of line for density. The opportunity for our members to have a good quality broadband connection is very important. MiEnergy has partnered with two local telephone cooperatives to assist our members, and many others within the communities we serve, to have a much needed, quality broadband service. Our challenges are great with low-density in a driftless terrain topography that significantly increases fiber deployment costs. For 2021, we averaged $18,000 per broadband cutover drop in certain areas. The DPC fiber deployment will support our broadband efforts.

MiEnergy Cooperative is fully cognizant of the significance of middle mile infrastructure to expand internet networks closer to unserved and underserved communities while offering equal opportunity for internet service providers to connect to last mile infrastructure in a cost-effective manner, ultimately promoting economic prosperity and closing the digital divide. DPC is committed to having a positive impact in MiEnergy's service area and surrounding areas by implementing middle mile infrastructure that will subsequently lower costs and offer increased options for citizens.

In this respect, we commit to interconnecting with DPC's Tri-State Fiber Deployment Project to effectively meet the needs of the area communities by providing reliable, affordable, high-speed broadband connection to all.

Sincerely,

Brian Krambeer
President/CEO