EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MINNESOTA

September 8, 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.

The Office of Broadband Development (OBD) at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development was established in state law in 2013 with the purpose to encourage, foster, develop, and improve broadband within the State of Minnesota. More recently, OBD was named by Governor Walz as the Eligible Entity responsible for handling Minnesota's allocation of BEAD and Digital Equity funding.

The Office of Broadband Development 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 has committed to having a positive impact in Southeast Minnesota, working closely with MiBroadband, a Minnesota based ISP, by implementing middle mile infrastructure that will increase competition among local internet service providers, and subsequently lower costs and offer increased options for citizens.

Sincerely,

Diane Wells

Diane Wells
Deputy Director

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