JACK BERGMAN
1ST DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–2201

September 10, 2022

Sarah Bleau
Middle Mile Director
Office of internet Connectivity and Growth
Nation Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Peninsula Fiber Network NTIA Enabling Middle Mile Application

Dear Director Bleau,

Access to high-speed broadband provides economic development opportunities, increases educational growth and participation, plays a significant role in the day-to-day activities for businesses and consumers, and provides critical infrastructure necessary for public safety, state, and national security.

Recently, Peninsula Fiber Network (PFN) applied for NTIA's Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program. PFN has the support of the State of Michigan and is partnering with the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office on the project.

It is my understand that the routes proposed in PFN's application impact Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula by:

- [redacted]
- Bringing a direct broadband connection to Beaver Island, Michigan, with the installation of an undersea cable. Beaver Island is the largest island in Lake Michigan and its year-round residents rely solely on microwave technology to connect residents with mainland emergency services and internet service. A direct connection to this island enhances the safety and security of the island and promotes economic and educational opportunities for the residents.
- Installing an undersea broadband connection from the Upper Peninsula to Beaver Island to Michigan's lower peninsula creates a redundant route interconnecting Michigan's two

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peninsulas. Currently, there is not an undersea cable connecting the peninsulas; should broadband facilities on the Mackinac Bridge become compromised, this undersea cable ensures continued service for residents, businesses, and public safety.

- Providing middle mile capacity in unserved and underserved areas of the First Congressional District. The land routes proposed by PFN in the Beaver Island project incorporates unserved and underserved areas. Installing middle mile infrastructure in these regions will help to lower the cost of end user providers interested in serving these rural areas. End-user providers can leverage the PFN infrastructure to build service offerings and increase speeds to rural residents.

The proposed projects in PFN's Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure application will significantly expand connectivity for Michigan residents and create a redundant and resilient middle mile network throughout our state.

Given the impact these projects will have on Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula, I ask you provide PFN full and fair consideration of their application.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress