

COUNTY OF SONOMA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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EFREN CARRILLO
FIFTH DISTRICT SUPERVISOR
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February 5, 2013

Tom West, Manager
Cathy Emerson, Co-Manager
Northeastern & Upstate CA Connect Consortia

RE: Letter of Support – GBB LLC NCRMMI Infrastructure Project

Dear Mr. West and Ms. Emerson:

Please accept this letter as my endorsement of the Golden Bear Broadband (GBB) LLC's Northern California Regional Middle Mile Infrastructure (NCRMMI) broadband infrastructure project. I strongly support GBB pursuing grant funding from the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) and a matching investment to help underwrite the capital cost of deployment. Deployment of broadband in rural communities is one of our Board's top priorities and is a critical investment in Northern California. As are aware, The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors has been strong proponent of broadband deployment since it adopted the Sonoma County Economic Develop Strategy and Jobs Plan in 2011.

It is my understanding the NCRMMI will interconnect Sonoma County with sixteen northern California counties via a redundant, multi-loop fiber-based network infrastructure. With grant funding from California Advanced Services Fun(CASF) and a matching investment this project will enhance and strengthen today's broadband infrastructure and provide connectivity to meet escalating demand. Such increased service capacity (backhaul and last-mile) makes broadband services available, accessible and affordable. This will expand choices for remote communities while preserving the north state's rural way of life.

The impacts of poor access to high speed connectivity are as follows:

- Underserved areas are disenfranchised and students face increasing educational disadvantages because they *lack access* to high speed Internet Services outside the school environment.
- Businesses, recreation and tourism cannot survive without modern websites, social media, and virtual;
- 35 of the 111 federally recognized Native American Tribal Communities reside in the 16 northern counties are denied the business attraction broadband provides and educational access is diminished;
- Libraries continue to remain dependent on print media, rather than transitioning to virtual information;

- Rural health clinics lack access to telemedicine support and critical care experts putting rural communities severe risk of isolation;

I understand the GBB will implement a comprehensive plan for deployment leveraging existing infrastructure and deploying new infrastructure forming a diverse and redundant, multi-loop, fiber-based network throughout all of northern California. Without CASF funding, the cost of building needed broadband infrastructure for these economically and geographically challenged communities will not happen and 1.634 million people will continue to be excluded from access.

While fiber to the home is an unrealistic expectation for rural remote areas, upgrading the existing networks to provide a fiber-based backbone to support fixed and mobile wireless networks makes good sense.

I strongly endorse the Golden Bear Broadband, LLC, NCRMMI application for infrastructure funds, and strongly encourage CASF/CPUC funding of this worthy project.

Sincerely,



Efren Carrillo
Supervisor, Fifth District