THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

ALASKA BROADBAND OFFICE

550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1535
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Main: 907.269.8159
Fax: 907.269.8125

September 18, 2024

Ms. Angela Thi Bennett, Digital Equity Director
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230
Email: abennett@ntia.gov

RE: Letter of Support for Alaskan's Efforts to Secure Funding through the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program

Dear Director Bennett:

This letter is to express support for Alaskan's efforts to secure funding through the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program. With historic funding from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for broadband deployment, Alaska will move closer to "Internet for All". However, the effort to attain "Digital Equity for All" will take considerably more funding than is currently available in the two remaining programs within the Digital Equity Act.

Organizations within Alaska are working diligently to bridge the gaps that exist in digital equity despite service delivery of programs being more complex, by orders of magnitude, due to our cultural diversity, degree of rurality, size, environment, topography, and weather. The Competitive Grant applications being submitted by Alaska entities represent projects that will be complimentary to projects anticipated under the upcoming Alaska Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program.

The Alaska Broadband Office encourages and commends these efforts and extends its full support to Alaska's Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program applicants. Please consider approving the applications for these entities attempting to cover digital equity gaps beyond the scope of Alaska's Digital Equity Plan.

Thank you again for the support the NTIA has provided to the state of Alaska and for the future opportunities to positively impact lives in Alaska.

Respectfully,

Thomas Lochner
Director, Alaska Broadband Office