

STATE OF KANSAS



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GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY

October 3, 2022

Alan Davidson  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Davidson,

The Kansas Office of Broadband Development (KOBD), in partnership with the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), is pleased to submit an application for the "Enabling Middle-Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program" program to expand middle mile infrastructure, reduce connectivity costs, and improve broadband resiliency in Kansas. I urge your strong consideration of this proposal.

This funding will be a critical component of ensuring universal, affordable broadband coverage for Kansans. Estimates indicate that around 100,000 Kansans have no access to internet at home. Kansas is a primarily rural state with many high-cost areas that lack a wireline provider. Providing this proposed middle-mile infrastructure would provide 27,000 underserved homes and businesses with access to high-speed broadband. Additionally, a significant portion of the fiber will go through counties that have higher poverty rates than the national average.

Kansas is one of only five states in the U.S. that does not have a dedicated fiber optic Research and Education network (REN), leaving our universities at a disadvantage for competitive research grants. This grant would provide REN dark fiber connectivity to Kansas institutions.

As you continue with the rollout of broadband funds passed in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, I encourage you to approve Kansas' EMMBI program application. We stand ready to work with you to ensure broadband access to all Kansans through this historic opportunity.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Kelly".

Laura Kelly  
Governor of Kansas