

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4704

October 15, 2009

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Honorable Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communication and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department Of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

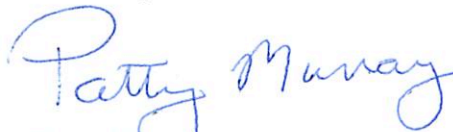
I am pleased to write in support of Washington Rural Broadband Cooperative's application for the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Funding from this grant would bring high speed internet to the Mt. Baker Foothill region, as well as a high bandwidth broadband service.

Washington Rural Broadband Cooperative's project will enhance public safety, education, tele-medicine, and economic development in its community. It will interconnect police and fire departments and enable cell phone carriers to provide service at a quicker response time to emergency incidents. In the medical field, doctors from metropolitan hospitals will be able to provide rapid assessment and guidance to first responders through video conference and tele-presence.

Funding would also assist in the educational and economic areas. High speed internet access made available to all households would help the school district meet upcoming federal mandates to keep schools functioning during a pandemic as well as increase the availability of enriched curriculum. It would allow for the development of small internet based businesses as well as better access to adult basic and continuing educational opportunities and workforce development.

Thank you for your consideration of Washington Rural Broadband Cooperative's application. Please do not hesitate to contact my Seattle office at 206-553-5545 with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator

PM\jb

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