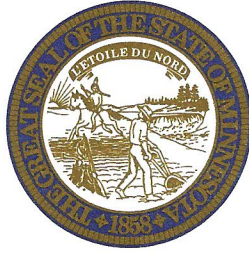


Peggy Bennett
State Representative

District 27A
Dodge, Faribault, Freeborn, Mower and
Steele Counties



Minnesota House of Representatives

COMMITTEES:
VICE CHAIR, EDUCATION INNOVATION POLICY
AGRICULTURE FINANCE
EDUCATION FINANCE

August 21, 2015

Office of Broadband Development
2015 Border-To-Border Broadband Development Grant Program
First National Bank Building
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Dear Office of Broadband Development:

BEVCOMM has presented me with an excellent broadband plan for Freeborn County, MN that would address lack of broadband internet access in rural areas and lack of connectivity in the county. I would like to express my full support of the MN Border-to-Border Broadband Development grant application for BEVCOMM. With BEVCOMM's long and successful history of providing state-of-art broadband service at modern speeds to other rural communities and strong reputation for customer service and community commitment, I am confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service for the residents of Freeborn County.

As an almost completely unserved rural area with limited modern Internet services, residents in and around the city of Freeborn (the target area for this grant) are faced many challenges, including limited medical resources due to the distance between patients, physicians, specialists and facilities. In addition, because of the rural nature of this area, students here do not receive equitable broadband resources, leaving them uncompetitive educationally with their urban peers who have broadband access. These students are lacking research opportunities, distance learning, video, and other educational tools that advanced broadband can bring to a rural homes and schools.

Funding BEVCOMM's project is critical for the local farmers to be able to utilize new and innovative farming technology, as well as for local businesses. In addition, the advent of advancements in telemedicine technology (for which we recently passed legislation) would be a tremendous health enhancement for a community like this where the citizens live miles from healthcare facilities. Without this broadband update, this type of health related service would be impossible.

The model BEVCOMM has presented represents an efficient, effective use of funds. With the many needs stated above, I believe it is extremely important that state broadband grant funding be obtained for the Freeborn area. I respectfully ask you to consider BEVCOMM's proposal for their fiber project in Freeborn County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peggy Bennett".

Rep. Peggy Bennett, 27A
507 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155
651-296-8216

