

March 15, 2021

(ADDRESS TO BUT DO NOT SEND TO THE COMMISSIONER BUT RATHER TO SARAH AT EDC,  
sarah@kandiyohi.com)

Steve Grove, Commissioner  
Office of Broadband Development  
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development  
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E-200  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Commissioner Grove:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission and Vibrant Broadband's application to the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program. This project would provide long-needed, reliable broadband connections to our underserved and unserved areas in Kandiyohi County, specifically to premises in [REDACTED] Townships. Additionally, this project will be critical in closing the digital divide in our outstate region.

Following are a few reasons why reliable internet connections are important:

- Economic growth and quality jobs in rural Kandiyohi County
- Telehealth and healthcare internet options for patients
- Educational opportunities and distance learning for all individuals
- Assistance with public safety issues
- Help senior citizens stay connected with friends and family
- Poor internet connections are linked to lower property values

Our organization is witnessing firsthand the importance of a high-speed connection. Without a reliable internet connection, rural residents will continue to fall behind their urban neighbors and rural businesses will suffer.

In a digital age, broadband service can make an impact on the demographic trends of citizens leaving the rural countryside for larger urban areas.

Kandiyohi County needs effective fiber-based broadband infrastructure that will serve our area's needs, both now and into the future. Internet use will only increase with time. An investment today will help shape the success of tomorrow.

Sincerely,