

United States Senate

November 18, 2024

The Honorable 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, D.C. 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Davidson:

I write in strong support of Nevada's Final Proposal to the Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. This funding will support broadband projects to help connect almost every Nevadan to reliable, high-speed broadband and close the digital divide.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58), which I was proud to help write and pass into law, created the BEAD program with the explicit mission to close the digital divide. This program is the largest federal investment in broadband in U.S. history. As part of this historic commitment, Nevada alone will receive \$416 million in federal funding with the goal of bringing high-speed, reliable broadband to every Nevadan.

Throughout its development of the Initial Proposal, Challenge Process, and Final Proposal for BEAD funding, Nevada's Office of Science, Innovation, and Technology (OSIT) has consulted with unserved, underserved, rural, and tribal communities in our state, as well as providers, local governments, and community anchor institutions. OSIT allowed for public comment and feedback consistently throughout this process, including proactively holding in-person events across the state, seeking public comment on proposed Regional Project Areas, and providing extensive technical assistance and resources to assist applicants in submitting competitive projects aligned with guidance from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

Nevada's approach to implementing the BEAD Program has leveraged additional resources to make funding received under BEAD stretch further, including encouraging subgrantees to interconnect to open-access middle mile infrastructure. Nevada's \$250 million middle mile broadband network—funded through federal programs like the NTIA's Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program, based on legislation I introduced and through which I was proud to secure \$43 million for Nevada—will lower overall costs for BEAD projects, enable a range of applicants to remain competitive, and make previously prohibitively expensive projects affordable. According to Nevada's Broadband Map, 80 percent of unserved locations in Nevada are within 10 miles of the middle mile network.

Considering over 80 percent of land in Nevada is owned or managed by federal agencies, many

projects funded under BEAD will require permits from multiple federal agencies, local governments, and tribes. Reviewing and approving this proposal promptly will allow subgrantees more time to meet build-out deadlines required by law, as projects built to many unserved areas in Nevada will necessarily cross federal land and must be given ample time to move through the required permitting processes with federal agencies. Advancing Nevada's application promptly will allow awardees to begin the permitting process and ensure they are provided with the time needed to receive appropriate permits and meet statutory construction deadlines.

I urge the NTIA to stand ready to receive Nevada's final application under this program, which will fund projects to connect the most rural and hard-to reach Nevadans to high-speed, reliable broadband. I urge you to give this application full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jacky Rosen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jacky" and last name "Rosen" clearly legible.

Jacky Rosen
United States Senate