

For Immediate Release: February 1,2010

Contact: Tony Hozeny, Department of Commerce, 608/267-9661

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT NOW AVAILABLE

MADISON---Nearly \$5 billion is available from the US Department of Commerce and the US Department of Agriculture for the expansion of broadband into unserved, underserved and rural areas. **Applications will be accepted from February 16, 2010 to March 15 2010.**

“High-speed broadband is an important competitive tool for both start-up and existing businesses and a benefit for citizens across Wisconsin,” said Wisconsin Department of Commerce Secretary Richard J. Leinenkugel. “Both public and private entities can apply for funding under these programs.”

The US Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded at \$2.6 billion, provides grants for deploying broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas of the United States, enhancing broadband capacity at public computer centers, and promoting sustainable broadband adoption projects. The US Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP), funded at \$2.2 billion, provides grants and loans to facilitate broadband deployment in rural communities.

Eligible applicants include:

- states, local governments, or any agency, subdivision, instrumentality, or political subdivision thereof;
- A territory or possession of the U.S.;
- An Indian Tribe;
- A native Hawaiian organization;
- a non-profit foundation, a non-profit corporation, a non-profit institution, or a non-profit association;
- Other non-profit entities;
- For-profit corporations; (h) Limited Liability Companies; and
- Cooperative or mutual organizations.

BTOP will award grants in three categories of eligible projects: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (\$2.35 billion); Public Computer Centers (\$150 million); and Sustainable Broadband Adoption (\$100 million).

BIP will award grants and loans in three categories of eligible projects: Last Mile Projects (\$1.7 billion); Middle Mile Projects (\$300 million); Satellite Projects (\$100 million); and Rural Library and Technical Assistance Projects (\$5 million). Up to \$95 million will be held in reserve.

Application packages for electronic submissions will be available at <http://www.broadbandusa.gov> Only applications for Technical Assistance and Rural Library Broadband grants will be submitted in paper form.

Interested parties may contact Anthony Wilhelm, Director, BTOP, Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications, NTIA, U.S. Dept. of Commerce (DOC); or David J. Villano, Assistant Administrator Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, USDA, BIP via Help Desk email: BroadbandUSA@usda.gov or Help Desk telephone: 1-877-508-8364.

Those interested in finding potential partners with whom to apply may wish to use the BroadbandMatch service created by NTIA and RUS: <http://match.broadbandusa.gov>