United States Senate

September 27, 2022

Mr. Alan Davidson
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator
National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA)
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20230

Assistant Secretary Davidson:

We write to you regarding the NTIA Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program. This program has the potential to help bring high-speed and high-capacity connectivity to every corner of Alaska. Middle mile is the connective backbone for broadband deployment, and will be critical in ensuring our most remote communities get access.

As you know, Alaska faces unique challenges in deploying rural broadband infrastructure. Our state has vast expanses—areas larger than most other states—devoid of interconnected roads, an electric grid, or water and sewage systems. Providing the necessary capacity and speeds through middle mile infrastructure to remote, unserved areas of Alaska is incredibly challenging.

It is important that the upcoming Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program take into account our unique challenges, and help Alaska bridge the digital divide. We are aware that Quintillion has applied for this program for their proposed "Nome to Homer Express Route" middle mile project. The proposed project will leverage their existing network to provide fiber optic infrastructure to communities in rural Alaska in desperate need. Further, their network will "close the fiber loop" around the state of Alaska, providing critical resiliency and redundancy for the very first time. We write in support of Quintillion's project, which will enable the connection of important anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, and hospitals, and the deployment of last mile service to government, businesses, and households across rural Alaska.

We appreciate working with you to improve connectivity in rural Alaska. Consistent with applicable law, policy, and guidance, we respectfully ask that you give due consideration to the application from Quintillion, as well as all other Alaskan grant applications and that you keep our offices apprised of the outcome of the applications. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator

Dan Sullivan
United States Senator