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**November 17, 2020**

Matt Behrens  
Deputy Chief Information Officer  
State of Iowa  
200 East Grand Ave  
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Vinton Municipal Communications Utility Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant

Dear Deputy Chief Behrens,

As a Vinton, Iowa area governmental entity it is important that municipal, county and state government organizations have access to high quality broadband service that is reliable, provided at an affordable rate and supported by a local broadband services entity. Our governmental organization relies upon broadband based communications to process citizen service requests, manage government operations and staff and provide emergency communications when public safety services are needed most.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic health pandemic experienced by Iowa citizens, it's critical to the Vinton, Iowa community that quality 1 Gigabit downstream / 1 Gigabit upstream broadband service is readily available. Access to high speed broadband service will allow Vinton area government employees to work from home, limit COVID-19 virus spread among government staff and others as well as offer Vinton area citizens access to telemedicine services.

Rural Iowa Broadband Grant applications from communications service providers should reduce or eliminate unserved and underserved areas through the installation of 25/3 broadband or 100/20 broadband facilities. The Vinton Municipal Communications Utility (VMCU) will use its Iowa broadband grant funds to provide much needed 1 Gigabit downstream and 1 Gigabit upstream broadband service to the Vinton, Iowa business community and the area covered under this application.

Vinton, Iowa is a growing community with an increasing number of residents and businesses. Today broadband coverage may be non-existent or limited in some areas making it difficult for emergency services to respond effectively. The health and safety of Vinton, Iowa citizens is enhanced with the deployment of Gigabit broadband service to the Vinton, Iowa community.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for the VMCU Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Ward".

Chris Ward  
City Administrator  
City of Vinton, Iowa