



November 19, 2020

State of Iowa, Office of the Chief Information Office
Attn: Iowa Broadband Grant Program Review Committee
Hoover State Office Building
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

I am writing this letter to express my full support of Corn Belt Telephones application for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. Sac County is a rural location with a population near 10,000 people. One goal of ours regarding economic development in our county is to make our communities amenity rich and attractive to live in. Rural broadband is certainly an important aspect of that.

I have personally had the pleasure of working with Corn Belt Telephone for five years working toward expanding fiber optics and rural broadband across Sac County. Over the last five years Corn Belt has taken the lead to make sure our community's residents, schools, and businesses have the kind of internet that we need to succeed.

In 2020 rural broadband is an extremely important tool that we utilize to help attract development. Without having it available new business will not locate in our county, residents will not choose to live here, and schools would quickly fall behind.

Our business need broadband to survive in this day of age with marketing and online shopping. We have to make sure that they have the connectivity needed to operate efficiently.

Rural broadband is extremely important for our rural schools now more than ever. We need rural broadband so our schools can remain competitive and offer our students the same opportunities that are available in larger communities. Since the pandemic started we have seen the need for more rural broadband to help aid in student learning with more and more households forced into remote learning situations.

Seeking resources to support this project to help make it possible shows Corn Belt Telephones commitment to make this project a success, and your monetary support would help them be one step closer to their goal.

I appreciate the foresight of the Empower Rural Iowa in recognizing how this grant could positively affect our whole county and I offer my full support for this project.

Thank you,

Brandy Ripley
Executive Director

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