JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

May 3, 2010

Lawrence E. Strickling
Administrator
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
United States Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Administrator Strickling:

On behalf of the State of Maine, I am transmitting recommendations for funding of six projects in the Second Round BTOP grant competition. One project is described as Comprehensive Community Infrastructure, three are Sustainable Broadband Adoption programs and two are Public Computer Center proposals.

We appreciate receiving a grant in the First Round competition for the so-called "Three Ring Binder" middle mile project and hope to further improve access to broadband with additional Second Round grants.

As with the First Round, we utilized a 3-part process for vetting proposals. A legislatively-created Broadband Strategy Council reviewed the proposals first, using the following five criteria: consistency with the BBSC vision; fostering and support for economic development; preservation of existing jobs and creation of new jobs; value of the project and viability of the project.

The ConnectME Authority then reviewed the Council's recommendations and transmitted them to me. After reviewing the recommendations with my staff, I agree with the recommendations of the ConnectME Authority and the Broadband Strategy Council and have included my thoughts within their recommendations. The projects identified are all worthy. There is strong commitment by the first round grant recipient and those offering the proposals in this round to work together to achieve the best possible solution statewide, avoid duplication and to provide access.

If you have any questions about our position on any of these projects, please feel free to contact me, or our state point of contact, Dick Thompson.

Sincerely

John E. Baldacci
Governor

cc: Ian Martinez

NTIA BTOP Round Two Applications – Maine

Highly Recommended Applications

Applicant	FAIRPOINT COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
	PORTLAND, ME
Application ID	6359
Contact	Ralph Thompson
	WHancock@fairpoint.com
Project title	Maine State and Last Mile Washington/Hancock
Program	BTOP
Proposed Project Area	ME
Project type	**Comprehensive Community Infrastructure**
Funding Round	Round 2 - Winter 2010
Grant request	$ 20,595,465
Description	This BTOP middle mile project will expand high speed broadband to 626 critical community facilities throughout Maine. A last mile component will extend high speed broadband to remote, underserved areas of Washington and Hancock Counties in northeast Maine. FairPoint Communications, Inc. (Applicant) and Northern New England Telephone Operations LLC (Co-Applicant).
Executive Summary	Executive Summary (pdf)
State Assessment and Recommendation	This project is **Highly Recommended.** Middle mile connections to critical community infrastructure locations and community anchor institutions will bring very high speed internet access to public safety entities, hospitals, libraries, community colleges, businesses and K-12 education systems. For most of these locations, this level of access would never be possible; enhancing public safety communication, telehealth, e-government, distance learning, business growth and e-commerce. The last mile portion of this project strengthens Maine's telecommunications infrastructure by providing critical last mile service to remote and underserved areas in Washington and Hancock Counties. Funding of the project will accelerate deployment of this service which is so important because these areas are struggling economically. Deployment of this service is absolutely necessary for economic development in the region. Fairpoint has assured the State that the project will not duplicate and will not create barriers to access, and we look forward to working with NTIA and Fairpoint to assist in meeting those goals. To ensure the most effective use of funding, NTIA should ensure that (1) this project does not duplicate, but does complement, the middle mile fiber that is being installed by Maine Fiber Company, the First-Round grant recipient that will construct the so-called "Three Ring Binder" and (2) that design of the project does not inadvertently create obstacles to open access through the intermingling of infrastructure with existing Fairpoint infrastructure.

Applicant	AXIOM TECHNOLOGIES, LLC
	JONESPORT, ME
Application ID	6899
Contact	Susan Corbett
	susan.corbett@axiom-tech.net
Project title	Washington County Education and Employment through Sustainable Broadband Adoption
Program	BTOP
Proposed Project Area	ME
Project type	**Sustainable Broadband Adoption**
Funding Round	Round 2 - Winter 2010
Grant request	$ 1,429,596
Description	The Washington County Education and Employment through Sustainable Broadband Adoption Project will employ innovative educational and employment programs through the use of and access to Broadband technology. It will address the County's poverty, rurality, and unemployment barriers to economic growth by providing models for success and improved educational opportunities for industry and healthcare.
Executive Summary	Executive Summary (pdf)
State Assessment and Recommendation	This project is **Highly Recommended.** Axiom's project focuses on increasing internet usage and adoption, among the most vulnerable populations and economically distressed industries. Providing education and training opportunities in healthcare, computer and internet technology that stresses cost effective and efficient operating methods is crucial for some of the poorest areas of Maine.

Applicant	MAINE STATE LIBRARY
	AUGUSTA, ME
Application ID	6471
Contact	Linda Lord, linda.lord@maine.gov
Project title	Maine Public Library Information Commons Project
Program	BTOP
Proposed Project Area	ME
Project type	**Public Computer Center**
Funding Round	Round 2 - Winter 2010
Grant request	$ 1,365,705
Description	The Maine Public Library Information Commons Project establishes or enhances public computer centers in 108 public libraries in Maine. The centers will provide broadband access, information, and training to vulnerable populations. This project also establishes 11 additional video conferencing regional hubs to enhance training for librarians and patrons.
Executive Summary	Executive Summary (pdf)
State Assessment and Recommendation	This project is **highly recommended**. Enhancing the capabilities of Maine Libraries to become access points for free internet access fits exactly with Maine's long term commitment to the Maine School and Library Network. Every public library in Maine has a broadband connection whether or not broadband is available in the community at large. Providing many of these libraries with advanced computing equipment will allow access to the internet by many vulnerable populations who have no other access, either to broadband service or to a home computer. The mobile labs will allow the libraries to go directly to the remote areas that do not contain a public library.

Recommended Applications

Applicant	MOTORBRAIN CONSULTING INC.
Application ID	7179
Contact	Brad Libby
	2076316391
	consult@hughes.net
Project title	Bridging the Last Mile of the Digital Divide
Program	BTOP
Proposed Project Area	ME
Project type	**Sustainable Broadband Adoption**
Funding Round	Round 2 - Winter 2010
Grant request	$ 5,571,780
Description	This project will provide HughesNet high-speed satellite Internet service to 4,900 qualified unserved Maine homes and businesses where there are no existing broadband services available for a period of 24 months at no cost for equipment or installation with a reduced monthly recurring charge. Through a collaborative effort with rural municipalities, we will identify and qualify last mile consumers where cable Internet and DSL are not available.
State Assessment and Recommendation	This project is **recommended**. We see this proposal as one that bridges the last mile gap and provides rural consumers, who currently have no other broadband option a way to gain access until high speed infrastructure reaches them. For those areas that will likely never see a wired or wireless solution, satellite service is the only solution. An innovative piece of the project is that when a wired service does reach one of Motorbrain's customers funded from this project, that the company will remove the equipment at no cost and install it further out to an unserved customer, also at no installation cost.

Applicant	BROADBAND FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
	NEW MARKET, MD
Application ID	6446
Contact	Robert Davila
	drrdavila@aol.com
Project title	Broadband for Maine's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children
Program	BTOP
Proposed Project Area	ME
Project type	**Sustainable Broadband Adoption**
Funding Round	Round 2 - Winter 2010
Grant request	$ 334,080
Description	This project will address the significant problem of low broadband usage by the deaf community in Maine by providing broadband access for a period of two years to low-income families with at least one school-aged deaf child. Broadband access has the potential to enable these deaf students to enrich their educations, as well as to remedy the isolation and marginalization these children face.
Executive Summary	Executive Summary (pdf)
State Assessment and Recommendation	This project is **recommended**. This is a unique project for Maine and will have a significant impact on low-income, deaf and hard of hearing children. Broadband is significantly underutilized by low-income families in general. The project targets the segment of low-income families that contain a deaf or hard of hearing child to enhance educational opportunities and increase communication capabilities.

Applicant	SOUTHERN AROOSTOOK COOPERATIVE BOARD OF EDUCATION
	HOULTON, ME
Application ID	6544
Contact	Mike Howard
	mhoward@satc.houlton.k12.me.us
Project title	Region Two School of Applied Technology BTOP PCC Grant
Program	BTOP
Proposed Project Area	ME
Project type	**Public Computer Center**
Funding Round	Round 2 - Winter 2010
Grant request	$ 2,337,320
Description	On behalf of its partners, Region Two School of Applied Technology is requesting funds to expand computing facilities at 38 sites in Maine. This project will assist Maine's most vulnerable employment populations by enhancing educational services for adult community members at regional vocational/technical schools and Adult Education Centers throughout the state.
Executive Summary	Executive Summary (pdf)
State Assessment and Recommendation	This project is **recommended**. Aroostook and Washington Counties are Maine's poorest. Traditional industries are shrinking and educational opportunities are lacking. The provision of distance learning equipment in regional vocational-technical centers and adult education centers will provide access to extensive resources needed to change the economic climate of this area of Maine.