

October 2, 2019

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Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
Hoover State Office Building, Level B
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50319
Phone: (515) 281-5503

OCT 10 2019

Initial: _____

RE: Empower Rural Iowa – Broadband Grant Program

Dear Chief Information Officer Annette Dunn and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of FMTC – I35, dba OmniTel Communications (OmniTel). As a resident of Oakland, Iowa, we would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application for OmniTel. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. OmniTel has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. We are confident in OmniTel's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in Oakland.

With the assistance from the broadband grant, OmniTel will be able to enhance our broadband connectivity with a fiber network design. This fiber build will enable us to overcome some geographical distances, empower us through information, and bring the world to us through a few simple strokes of a keyboard. As an unserved rural area with limited access to Internet services, we face many challenges including limited medical resources and distance between patients, physicians, specialists and facilities. Because of the rural nature of our area, our students do not receive equitable broadband resources as other students in more urban learning centers. We lack to ability to engage in distance learning, video and other tools that advanced broadband can bring to our students. Therefore, it is extremely important that broadband grant funding be obtained to provision for much needed broadband service to our area.

We strongly urge the Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa fund this Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in OmniTel's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,

Barbara J Cooper
40154 Honeysuckle Rd.
Oakland, Iowa 51560