

JESSE GREEN

STATE SENATOR

Twenty-fourth District

Statehouse: (515) 281-3371

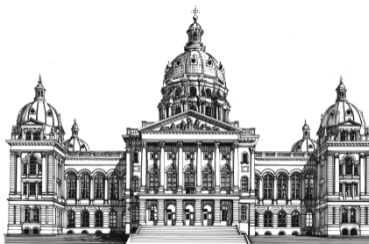
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HOME ADDRESS

2344 360th Street

Harcourt, IA 50544

jesse.green@legis.iowa.gov

**The Senate**

State of Iowa

Eighty-ninth General Assembly

STATEHOUSE

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

COMMITTEES

Labor and Business Relations – Vice Chair

Administrative Rules Review

Agriculture

Human Resources

Natural Resources and Environment

Veterans Affairs

Ways and Means

*Education Appropriations Subcommittee –**Vice Chair*

February 23, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa

200 E. Grand Ave.

Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). Their broadband plan for rural Iowans in my area would address the lack of adequate broadband internet access and connectivity in the area.

As an underserved area with limited modern internet services, residents are faced with many challenges, such as limited medical resources and distance barriers for patients, difficulties in distance learning for students, or challenges in working from home. With funding assistance from the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant program, WebCal's proposed expansion will enable Fraser residents to overcome geographical distances and bring the world to their fingertips.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jesse Green'.

Senator Jesse Green

February 23, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

As the superintendent of the Boone Community School District, I know the importance of expanding access to state-of-the-art broadband services is extremely important. I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Application for Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal).

The Boone Community School District utilizes broadband connection everyday and greatly enhances learning opportunities for our students in the classroom. Education will continue to evolve, and it is very evident that digital learning will continue to play a crucial role. It is critical for all students in our school district to have access to reliable, high speed Internet. Without advanced broadband, the learning opportunities for a percentage of our students will be greatly limited.

The lack of broadband in underserved communities is a great challenge to our district and has a direct impact on the future success of our students. Due to the rural nature of the area, students do not receive equitable broadband resources as compared to those in more urban areas. With this grant, WebCal's expansion of fiber broadband will help some of our rural students overcome this obstacle and provide opportunities for research, peer collaboration, distance learning, video and advanced tools. The lack of reliable internet service has limited our district from being able to take advantage of virtual learning days during inclement weather. Even when some of our students have internet, it's reliability is inconsistent and not able to handle the bandwidth necessary for learning. Providing hot spots has also been ineffective, as service for the hot spot has not been sufficient.

WebCal has a long and successful history of providing state-of-the-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural communities and has a strong reputation for community commitment and customer service, I am confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service in Boone.

Sincerely,

Julie Trep
Superintendent
Boone CSD
500 7th St.
Boone, Iowa 50036



Engage, Educate & Empower
732 West Division Street, Ogden, IA 50212
Phone: 515.275.2894 - Fax: 515.275.4537
www.ogdenschools.org

February 16, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

As the superintendent of the Ogden Community School District I know the importance of expanding access to state-of-the-art broadband services is extremely important. I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Application for Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). They have a long and successful history of providing exceptional communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for excellent customer service and commitment.

The Ogden CSD utilizes broadband connection every day and this greatly enhances learning opportunities for our students in the classroom. Education will continue to evolve, and it is very evident that digital learning will continue to play a crucial role. It is critical for all students in our school district to have access to reliable, high speed Internet. Without advanced broadband, the learning opportunities for a percentage of our students will be greatly limited.

The lack of broadband in underserved communities is a great challenge to our district and has a direct impact on the future success of our students. Due to the rural nature of the area, students do not receive equitable broadband resources as compared to those in more urban areas. With this grant, WebCal's expansion of fiber broadband will help some of our rural students overcome this obstacle and provide opportunities for research, peer collaboration, distance learning, video and advanced tools.

Many students and staff reside within this area and having fiber to their addresses is a necessity not a luxury. Not having appropriate internet connectivity is widely known to be detrimental to a student's ability to completely engage in the educational programs in today's age.

WebCal has a long and successful history of providing state-of-the-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural communities and has a strong reputation for community commitment and customer service. I am confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service in Frazer Iowa and the surrounding area.

Sincerely,

Pam Dodge, Superintendent

Ogden Community School District will inspire the next generation of innovative thinkers to persevere and succeed in meeting tomorrow's opportunities.



Engage, Educate & Empower
732 West Division Street, Ogden, IA 50212
Phone: 515.275.2894 - Fax: 515.275.4537
www.ogdenschools.org

February 21, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

As the elementary principal of the Ogden Community School District, I know the importance of expanding access to state-of-the-art broadband services is extremely important. I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Application for Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). They have a long and successful history of providing exceptional communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for excellent customer service and commitment.

The Ogden Community School District utilizes broadband connection everyday and greatly enhances learning opportunities for our students in the classroom. Education will continue to evolve, and it is very evident that digital learning will continue to play a crucial role. It is critical for all students in our school district to have access to reliable, high speed Internet. Without advanced broadband, the learning opportunities for a percentage of our students will be greatly limited.

The lack of broadband in underserved communities is a great challenge to our district and has a direct impact on the future success of our students. Due to the rural nature of the area, students do not receive equitable broadband resources as compared to those in more urban areas. With this grant, WebCal's expansion of fiber broadband will help some of our rural students overcome this obstacle and provide opportunities for research, peer collaboration, distance learning, video and advanced tools.

Ogden Community School District will inspire the next generation of innovative thinkers to persevere and succeed in meeting tomorrow's opportunities.



Engage, Educate & Empower
732 West Division Street, Ogden, IA 50212
Phone: 515.275.2894 - Fax: 515.275.4537
www.ogdenschools.org

At the start of the 2020-2021 school year, our district became one to one for students in Kindergarten through twelfth grade. This gives students an opportunity to practice and continue their learning at home. As a one to one district we now have the opportunity to learn in a remote model. Broadband service for all students in our district is critical for this to be successful.

WebCal has a long and successful history of providing state-of-the-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural communities and has a strong reputation for community commitment and customer service, I am confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service in Fraser.

Sincerely,

Amy Krause
Ogden Elementary Principal

313 W Sycamore Street
Ogden, Iowa 50212
(515) 275-2912



Jim Duncan, Elementary Principal
Southeast Valley Schools, Prairie Valley Elementary
3116 Zearing Ave. Farnhamville, IA 50538
Phone: (515) 467-5700
Cell: (515) 351-1519
Email: jduncan@svjags.org

Feb. 21, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503
RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Application for Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). I write this letter as a professional educator, parent, and citizen.

The Southeast Valley Schools use broadband connectivity as a regular component of our education processes. Our students use the internet for their learning, school work, and communication with their teachers. One of the main goals of all of our Iowa schools is to help students become college and career ready. Those two goal areas typically require the usage and skills with digital resources and the demand for such skills continues to grow exponentially each year.

Without broadband accessibility, rural area students will be at a significant disadvantage as compared to others who have adequate connectivity. Such a disadvantage could affect students' levels of educational resources which could in-turn affect their overall education.

The pandemic has greatly increased this already dire need for broadband accessibility for students and their families. More and more families have someone who has an occupation that requires some form of digital capabilities. Broadband connectivity appears to no longer be a matter of convenience. It now seems to be a matter of necessity in order to have a level playing field. Broadband is vital for all of our students and families today, so that they can progress and be prepared for tomorrow.

WebCal has a proven record for providing outstanding broadband service in rural Iowa. WebCal's expansion of that connectivity will benefit our rural areas and far beyond. Thank you for your sincere consideration to help our present and our future through providing our people the ability to grow and succeed through broadband expansion.

Sincerely,

Jim Duncan

Jim Duncan

February 24, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Fraser Iowa, I would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for WebCal. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. We are confident in WebCal's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in Fraser.

Seven years ago, I moved to Fraser and my children and grandchildren have loved being able to come to my house to celebrate life's events. There is a running joke though about the lack of service and being in the dark ages when they come to my house. Everyone laughs about it but in all seriousness, they would like to see me be able to participate in more online activities. The lack of connectivity and availability of service impacts my life on a daily basis but the most disappointing is when it involves my grandchildren. Even through the school closure and shut-downs, my grandchildren have invited me to attend virtual concerts, piano recitals and graduations. I've had to go to my children's homes to be apart of these and have missed some opportunities because of the connectivity problems in Fraser.

My grandchildren from Delaware come stay with me for a month each summer and I love this time. When they come, their dad brings them and usually stays a few days. He is a lawyer and of course brings his work with him. The lack of service and connectivity impacts him and frustrates the clients and law-firm as well. When he is at my home, he typically spends 10+ hours daily doing his work. When very important meetings and work needs to be completed, he drives to the local library and sets up work operations there. This is not ideal. Not only is it a public place, but it is also over 20 minutes away. This reduces the amount of time he gets to spend with his children, me and time he could be relaxing. It is 2021. Twenty + years have gone by and we are still not connected to a reliable, high-speed internet service, it is time we are given this opportunity. Frustrating as it is, it could be easily remedied with the addition of fiber optic service from WebCal. I look forward to moving into the technology age!

I strongly urge the Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, not only will this help with my family

communication and relationships, but will improve my quality of life. I urge you to please grant WebCal the opportunity to supply fiber-optic services to the Fraser area.

Cathy Christensen

1041-156th St.

Boone, Iowa 50036

515-724-2863

February 17, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Fraser, Iowa, we would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for WebCal. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. We are confident in WebCal's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in Fraser.

With the assistance from the broadband grant, WebCal 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 the 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 Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in WebCal's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,

Cindy S. Duncan

February 23, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Boone, Iowa, with a student living in Fraser, Iowa I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for WebCal. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. I am confident in WebCal's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in Fraser.

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

I strongly urge the Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in WebCal's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of this community.

Sincerely,

Fran Duncan

February 23, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Fraser, Iowa, I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for WebCal. Since 1954, WebCal has been providing surrounding communities with telephone, cable and most recently fiber optic services.

The rural life we live in Fraser is perfect for raising our young three daughters. They can be a kid and explore nature, seasons and a quiet space to learn and grow. The only drawback to our home is the lack of internet service. We currently use our cell phones as a way to connect to the internet for school, home and leisure activities. During the recent school closure and virtual learning system, my oldest daughter was able to participate with her teacher/classmates some but not entirely due to limited connectivity and shortage of data. For example, she joined a class virtual meeting and was disconnected due to limited connectivity. She had numerous assignments she could complete but was unable because we did not have enough data to support this amount of classwork. I believe she would be further ahead in her schooling if she had been able to do more of the assigned work. Our three girls are ages 6, 3 and 7 months old. In the future, these girls will be expected to complete many online assignments, projects and classwork. The amount of online classwork teachers assign now is minimal to the expectations in the years to come. My daughters need this service to benefit their education.

Our home operations such as paying bills, online research for home projects and ordering items for daily living are sometimes limited because of connectivity and data shortages. When we are unable to get service at our home, we have a few choices: drive to the top of the hill to get service (we live in a river valley), go to the local library or complete these needs at work. None of these solutions are ideal. Leisure activities such as watching videos, chatting with friends and family, downloading music and new apps are a treat at our house. We try to keep the girls in the 21st Century by allowing them to do these things, but they do miss out on regular screen-time. Our family would like to be able to communicate with family, engage in online learning and enjoy all the internet has to offer and this will be possible with the addition of fiber optic services from WebCal.

I strongly urge the Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, and bring WebCal's reliable and high-speed internet to Fraser.

Sincerely,

Josh Duncan

1051- 156th St.

Boone, IA 50036

515-460-1901

February 18, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Fraser, Iowa. In today's world it's almost essential to have internet in your home.

I have a daughter and with everything that is going on with COVID in our community and schools we're finding it harder and harder to do online learning without internet. We use my phone as a hotspot and where we live it's very unreliable!! Sometimes there is service most times there is not.

If we could get a great provider as WebCal is it could make online learning that much easier. I have spoken with a large amount of people in our rural community and they agree that having easy access at our fingertips to anything anywhere would hugely impact our day to day lives from work, school, keeping in touch with distant family, and etc.

I have been dreaming of the day that my home had something so small yet so BIG that it would help so greatly.

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 Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in WebCal's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,

Nathan Duncan

1013 157th St.

Fraser, Ia 50036

February 23, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

As a Special Education Teacher in Ogden Schools, I know the importance of expanding access to state-of-the-art broadband services is extremely important. I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Application for Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). They have a long and successful history of providing exceptional communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for excellent customer service and commitment.

The Ogden Schools utilize broadband connection everyday and greatly enhances learning opportunities for our students in the classroom. Education will continue to evolve, and it is very evident that digital learning will continue to play a crucial role. It is critical for all students in our school district to have access to reliable, high speed Internet. Without advanced broadband, the learning opportunities for a percentage of our students will be greatly limited.

The Fraser area has a unique school-aged population. This tiny township is a home to children who attend three different school districts. Boone Community Schools, Southeast-Valley Schools and Ogden Schools are represented in this rural location. As a Special Education Teacher in the Ogden Schools, limited internet access impacts my ability to complete the numerous paperwork requirements of my position at home. Because of this, I travel to Ogden to utilize the school internet. This disrupts my schedule, my children and work.

During the state-wide educational shut-down, I was expected to complete virtual meetings with teachers and students. This was not possible sometimes due to the lack of speed, connectivity and data to support these responsibilities. I was unable to connect with my special education students on a consistent basis and therefore, their learning suffered. I also serve students with severe behaviors and these students suffered because of the behavior instruction I was unable to provide as well as the relationships that became strained due to the lack of communication.

With the addition of this fiber-optic service to my area, I will be equipped to fully engage in the teaching and learning that my students have missed out on because of where I live.

WebCal has a long and successful history of providing state-of-the-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural communities and has a strong reputation for community commitment and customer service, I am confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service in Fraser.

Sincerely,

Rachel Duncan
313 West Sycamore Street
Ogden, Iowa 50212
515-275-2795

February 17, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Fraser, Iowa, we would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for WebCal. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. We are confident in WebCal's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in Fraser.

With the assistance from the broadband grant, WebCal 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 the 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 Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in WebCal's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,



February 23, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Fraser, Iowa, we would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for WebCal. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. We are confident in WebCal's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in Fraser and the surrounding area.

With the assistance from the broadband grant, WebCal 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 the 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 Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in WebCal's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,

Lori King

520 joy ave

Boone, IA

February 19, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa

200 E Grand Ave.

Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

As a Boone County Supervisor, I understand the importance of expanding access to broadband internet services to all of our citizens, rural and urban, in order to provide the economic and educational opportunities needed to become and remain competitive on a regional, state and national level. As such, I am expressing my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Application for Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal).

Boone County government relies extensively on broadband connection for nearly every service we provide and extending this modern-day necessity to our citizens is, in my eyes, highly needed and overdue. The importance of broadband connectivity for all Iowans is equally embraced as a necessity by our Governor and the majority, if not all, representatives in our state legislature.

Lack of broadband in underserved communities is one of the greatest challenges we face in Boone County, and has a direct impact on the future success of our rural residents. Especially impacted are individuals and businesses currently underserved as compared to their counterparts in communities who enjoy the many advantages of this resource. It is time we fairly support all Iowans.

WebCal has a long history of providing state-of-the-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural communities and has a strong reputation for community commitment and customer service, I am confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service in the unserved and underserved areas of Boone County.

Sincerely,



Erich Kretzinger
Boone County Supervisor
1443 Lakeview Place
Boone, IA 50036

February 17, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa
200 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
Phone: (515) 281-5503

RE: Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant Program – NOFA #005

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (WebCal). As a resident of Fraser, Iowa, we would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for WebCal. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. WebCal has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. We are confident in WebCal's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in Fraser.

With the assistance from the broadband grant, WebCal 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 the 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 Chief Information Officer and Review Committee to fund this Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application, not only will this help with sustaining the future of advanced broadband services in WebCal's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,

Charles and Kahola McKinney
524 Joy Ave, Boone, IA 50036