

TIM KRAAYENBRINK
STATE SENATOR
Fifth District
Statehouse: (515) 281-3371

HOME ADDRESS

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The Senate

State of Iowa
Eighty-seventh General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, IA 50319

COMMITTEES

Appropriations, *Vice Chair*
Education
Local Government
Transportation

Education Appropriations
Subcommittee, *Chair*

July 26, 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 #006

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 (Webster-Calhoun) broadband plan for portions of rural Webster County would address the lack of adequate broadband Internet access and connectivity in the area. Due to Webster-Calhoun's long and successful history of providing state-of-the-art broadband service at modern speeds to other rural Webster County communities and their strong reputation for customer service and community commitment, I am confident in their capability to enhance broadband service for the residents of rural Fort Dodge.

As an underserved area with limited modern Internet services, residents of rural Fort Dodge are faced with many challenges, such as limited medical resources and distance barriers between patients, physicians, and facilities. Because of the rural nature of the area, students do not receive equitable broadband resources as compared to those in more urban areas. Rural students may lack the opportunity for research, distance learning, video, and other tools that advanced broadband can deliver.

With funding assistance from the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant program, Webster-Calhoun's proposed expansion will enable the residents of rural Webster County to overcome geographical distances, empower them through information, and bring the world to their fingertips. Additionally, I feel strongly that this project will enable greater

collaboration and teamwork between community service centers, public safety offices, county offices, and municipal offices.

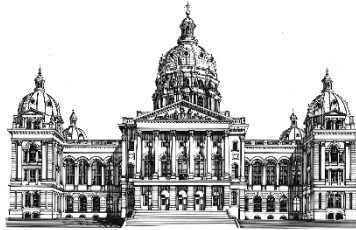
I respectfully ask you to consider Webster-Calhoun's proposal for their fiber project in rural Webster County. It is extremely important that state broadband grant funding be obtained to provide much needed broadband service to this area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Kraayenbrink". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tim" and last name "Kraayenbrink" clearly distinguishable.

Senator Timothy Kraayenbrink

Ann Meyer
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Ninth District
Statehouse: (515) 281-3221
e-mail – ann.meyer@legis.iowa.gov
Cell: 515-570-6610



COMMITTEES
Human Resources, Chair
Appropriations
State Government
Transportation

HOME ADDRESS
1948 Stadium Drive
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501

House of Representatives
State of Iowa
Eighty-Ninth General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
Health and Human Services

July 26, 2021

Office of the Chief Information Officer of the State of Iowa

200 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

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I respectfully ask you to consider Webster-Calhoun's proposal for their fiber project in rural Webster County. It is extremely important that state broadband grant funding be obtained to provide much needed broadband service to this area.

Sincerely,
Representative Ann Meyer



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

July 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 #006

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

July 27, 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 #006

Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster-Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (Webster-Calhoun). We would like to express our full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion grant application for Webster-Calhoun. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural communities, as well as a strong reputation for excellent customer service and community commitment. We are confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service for our event center and campground. With the assistance of this grant, Webster-Calhoun's expanded broadband network will enable us to overcome geographical distances, empower us through information, and bring the world to us through the touch of a keyboard. As an unserved rural area with limited availability to advanced 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. Our community currently lacks the research; distance learning, video and other tools that advanced broadband can bring to a rural school. Therefore, it is extremely important that broadband grant funding be obtained to provide much needed broadband service to our area.

Our property is multifunctional. We are an event center for weddings, reunions, funerals, and other meetings. We have a campground, and long term or short term lodging. We have a restaurant slated to open End of Summer 2021. The North Central Consortium School is also housed on the property. Our internet usage would be available for all guests using the facility including the school. During the opening of our facility, we contacted a few different companies about getting service. We were told a range of things such as: service is not available, the cost to run service is extremely expensive, and the service is not dependable. All of the above items are true. Our service is not always dependable given our geographic location to Fort Dodge.

Currently, guests have spotty service which have led to issues with various events. Conferences and meetings have had their connections time out or fall off during presentations. In today's culture, texting and the usage of apps like Snap Chat have difficulties sending in a timely manner.

We are using satellite for television services, and most people prefer to stream using their services. Not only is this satellite service costly, the ability to connect and stream a show or movie is extremely difficult. We have people staying in long term lodging or in the campgrounds that require them to have an internet connection to complete their jobs. This has been a battle to ensure they have a decent connection to at least send and receive emails.

Webster-Calhoun has a long and successful history of providing state-of-art broadband service at advanced speeds to other rural Webster County communities and has a strong reputation for community commitment and customer service, we are confident in their capabilities of enhancing broadband service for rural Fort Dodge.

Sincerely,
Lizard Creek Ranch
1762 Johnson Ave
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
515-574-9613

July 27, 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 #006

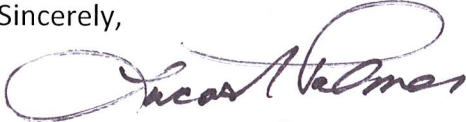
Dear Chief Information Officer and Review Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Webster-Calhoun Cooperative Telephone Association (Webster-Calhoun). As a resident of rural Fort Dodge, Iowa, I would like to express my full support of the Empower Rural Iowa, Emergency Broadband Expansion Grant application for Webster-Calhoun. They have a long and successful history of providing state-of-art communications services within the State of Iowa. Webster-Calhoun has a strong reputation for community commitment and strong customer service. I am also head of operations for a global manufacturing company located in a rural area. Due to many issues with internet and our previous carrier, we switched to Webster-Calhoun for our services and they have proven to be an exemplary business partner, providing us with exception coverage and service. I am confident in Webster-Calhoun's capabilities for enhancing broadband service for those residing in rural Fort Dodge.

With the assistance from the broadband grant, Webster-Calhoun 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.

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 Webster-Calhoun's proposed funded service area, but also promoting the future economic stability of our community.

Sincerely,



LUCAS PALMER



Webster-Calhoun

Cooperative Telephone Association

Testimonials of support:

WCCTA has proven, through effective and stable service, that they follow through on their commitments and meet or exceed what they promise to their customers. Not only is their service and product above expectations, they provide service at a much lower cost than we experienced with a previous provider.

-Luke Palmer, Sr Operations Manager, CJ Bio
1926 Harvest Avenue, Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Just wanted to let you know that I am very pleased with Central Cable (contractor), they have been great in town, great to work with and top-notch at clean up. As Mayor I was worried going into this because of all the digging in the right of way but I'm very pleased with the results. Webster-Calhoun is a top-notch company and the Central Cable crew you sent to Manson is top-notch as well. We are so looking forward to having quality and reliable services. Thanks for coming to Manson!

-Dave Anderson, Mayor, City of Manson

Quality and reliable Internet service is an extremely critical part of our business model, allowing us to lead with technology and provide online services to our customers. Having multiple locations and services from different providers, we experience a significant difference in working with a local independent company like Webster-Calhoun. Time and again, WCCTA has proven to be vastly superior in service, reliability, and cost-effectiveness compared to the larger corporate companies. We consider WCCTA to be an invaluable partner.

-Kevin Black, President, Heartland Bank
1201 Market Street, Gowrie, IA 50501

WCCTA supplies Iowa Central Community College our connection between the Main Campus and East Campus with a reliable and stable connection. We were outgrowing the connection that we had setup and within a short amount of time WCCTA was able to turn up the bandwidth without great expense. I have WCCTA as my personal internet at home, and I have had no problems with their service. Especially when both my wife and I were working from home and with my son gaming in the basement (without lag.) I highly recommend WCCTA as a service provider.

-Jeff Nelsen, Director of Institutional Technology, Iowa Central Community College, One Triton Circle, Fort Dodge, IA 50501