



305 Montgomery Street | PO Box 487 | Decorah, IA 52101

July 25, 2023

Ms. Jessica Turba
Special Projects Administrator
Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)
200 East Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309

RE: Dorchester OCIO #8 application

Dear Ms. Turba:

Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation's (NEICAC) vision statement states, "Create inclusive communities with equitable access to resources and opportunities where all individuals and families thrive." To thrive, NEICAC believes broadband can connect families to services and provide equitable access to our residents within our service and the Dorchester area. NEICAC fully supports the application from Allamakee Clayton Electric Cooperative (ACEC) for OCIO #8. The proposed application serves seven homes in and around the rural Dorchester area.

The Internet has become a vital utility. Connecting to school, work, healthcare, social service agencies, business, family, and friends is no longer a convenience but a necessity to access critical benefits and healthcare, enhance work and school opportunities and strengthen relationships. Studies indicate that low-income households, especially those in rural areas, have less access. Expanding broadband to include previously unserved and underserved households within our rural part of the state helps level the playing field and increase equity for those with limited resources.

NEICAC's mission also aims to advance community development. Establishing partnerships to create broadband access can significantly enhance our community services and overall viability. ACEC's pricing of \$59.99, \$89.99 and \$129.99 provides a reasonable structure for affordability to those rural households and businesses. The options of having 100/100 or even 1000/1000 is a great benefit to the growth our region.

We want our residents and businesses to flourish. This funding can improve social and economic conditions for Allamakee County residents, advance community development, and expand economic growth. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Trisha Wilkins
Chief Executive Officer