

United States Senate

HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 112
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0505
(202) 224-3553
<http://boxer.senate.gov/contact>

March 18, 2010

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Locke:

I am writing in support of the \$8,400,000 Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant application submitted by the Nevada County Economic Resource Council. If awarded, this grant would fund the Nevada County Connected wireless broadband project that would expand high speed wireless connections to this rural county.

The Nevada Economic Resource Council (NERC) is a non-profit organization that is leading the Nevada County Connected project on behalf of the region. Nevada County does not have access to affordable, high speed broadband services and this grant would benefit local services such as law enforcement/first responders, health services, distance education, as well as help bridge the digital divide for small businesses and residents who have not had access to this technology. Furthermore, I understand that the Nevada County Connected project would create approximately 60 construction jobs in the local community to build towers and install equipment. It would also improve the long-term economic viability for local businesses that have not had access to this much-needed technology.

The State of California and the local community are also committed to this project. I understand that the California Public Utilities Commission has committed a 10 percent match for this project, and that the NERC is raising an additional 20 percent of the project's total funding. I am attaching a resolution from the Nevada County Board of Supervisors that demonstrates the strong support the Nevada County Connected project has in the community.

In advance, I thank you for your attention to this letter. If you or your staff have any questions regarding this letter, please contact my Deputy State Director, Stacey Smith, at 916-448-2787.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

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