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**RICK LARSEN**  
2ND DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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COMMITTEES:  
TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ARMED SERVICES

BUDGET

October 23, 2009

The Honorable Lawrence E. Strickling  
Assistant Secretary for Communication and Information  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

I am writing in support of Washington Rural Broadband Cooperative's application for the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The grant funds would be used to bring high speed internet to the Mt. Baker Foothills area, as well as high bandwidth broadband service.

Washington Rural Broadband Cooperative's project will enhance public safety and telemedicine in its community. It will interconnect police and fire departments and allow cell phone carriers to provide services in areas previously without which will enable much quicker response to incidents. Health care professionals can provide immediate assessment and guidance to first responders via video conference and telepresence.

This project also has broad implications for education and economic development. High speed internet access made available to all households would help the school district meet upcoming federal mandates to keep schools functioning during a pandemic and increase the availability of enriched curriculum. It provides access and support to small and developing businesses and allows the community to participate in – and compete within the global business environment.

I encourage you to give full and due consideration to this application.

Sincerely,



Rick Larsen  
United States Representative  
Washington State – 2<sup>nd</sup> District