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April 22, 2019

Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
Senator Fred Girod (Co-Chair)
Representative Paul Holvey (Co-Chair)
Senator Peter Courtney
Senator Betsy Johnson
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Senator Chuck Thomsen
Representative Tina Kotek
Representative Mike McLane
Representative Nancy Nathanson
Representative Greg Smith

900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 5030 Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF)

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction,

We would like to confirm our support for the Governor's Regional Solutions Program and one of its important tools, the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF).

We support the Regional Solutions Program's approach of recognizing the unique regional economies throughout the state. We have found value-added benefits with Regional Solutions in our community due to the program's ability to identify priorities, solve problems, and seize opportunities. One important tool for the Regional Solutions Program is the RIF because it enables community and economic development projects without a clear funding source to be completed as they align with regional priorities. Regional Solutions utilizing the RIF tool is a powerful community and economic development combination because it recognizes the importance of flexible and accountable funding, strong community support, leveraged and aligned resources, and collaboration.

Sherman County has been very fortunate to receive significant Regional Infrastructure Funds for two fiber optic based broadband projects. Reliable, robust broadband service is critical infrastructure for community and economic development as well as access to education, workforce training, health care, public safety, and other services in rural communities. There are

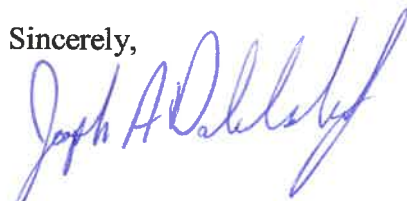
available to address gaps in this service for communities in Oregon. However, the RIF has been critical along with investment from the cities in Sherman County, the County, and private partners to move solutions forward.

The County received \$200,000 for the Sherman Cities Broadband Initiative in which a public/private partnership has been formed with Gorge Networks to connect fiber lines throughout all four Cities as well as a commercial center. The City of Moro currently has a 1 gigabit service available through this project, with the City of Grass Valley in the process of connecting service to local businesses and residents. By June 2019 the rest of the cities (Wasco and Rufus as well as the community of Biggs Junction) will be connected. This service provides up to 1 gigabyte of high speed internet to Sherman County businesses, community institutions, and residents, which is comparable service to what customers in urban communities are able to access.

The County also received \$820,000 for middle mile fiber build between the Cities of Wasco and Rufus that is necessary to provide enough bandwidth to the community for the fiber based broadband service being provided through the Sherman Cities initiative. This project is the last piece of a \$2.2 million dollar project to complete fiber connections between all of Sherman County's Cities. This project is currently out to bid with construction to be completed by Fall 2019. Without these funds, projects such as these would be difficult to implement.

We appreciate your support of the RIF and its benefit to regionally significant projects for our community.

Sincerely,



Joe Dabulskis
Sherman County Judge