



Louisiana Office of Broadband
Development & Connectivity

August 8, 2023

Veneeth Iyengar

Executive Director

Dear _____:

As we approach the fall season, we are working with an even greater sense of urgency toward eliminating the digital divide, and we are grateful for your help and support. I'm writing to provide a quick update and highlight key wins you can share with your constituents.

Louisiana received nearly \$1.36 billion from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the eighth-largest allocation in the nation and 10th-largest per capita. This funding will allow the state to bring high-speed, affordable internet to all of your constituents.

While our office focuses on last mile connectivity to homes and businesses, it is also important to invest in the main internet highways, called "middle-mile infrastructure." We strongly supported Zayo Group's application, which was ultimately approved, to upgrade and build 205 miles of underground fiber across Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Jackson, Lincoln, Ouachita, Madison, Richland and Webster parishes by the end of 2025. Building underground will ensure resilience in the case of natural disasters.

Addressing healthcare challenges in rural Louisiana is critical, so we partnered with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation and the State Library of Louisiana to provide grants to libraries in Beauregard, Cameron, Concordia, East Carroll, Franklin, Ouachita, St. John the Baptist, Union, Vermilion, Washington and West Baton Rouge parishes. The grants will help purchase laptops, tablets and private booths where patrons can receive telehealth care, eliminating the need to travel for healthcare services.

Our office is engaging with our federal and local partners to launch a grant round using infrastructure dollars as soon as possible. As always, should you need anything from our office, we are always available. Thanks once again for your support.

Sincerely,

Veneeth Iyengar

Louisiana Division of Administration

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