



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development

FEB 23 2010

An Open Letter from Rural Utilities Service Administrator Jonathan Adelstein

SUBJECT: Broadband Initiatives Program Information and Outreach

TO: All Interested Parties

FROM: Jonathan Adelstein
Administrator
Rural Utilities Service

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Adelstein".

We are very pleased with the level of interest expressed in funding for the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) under NOFA 2. For the second Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA), we've made some significant changes from the first NOFA that we believe will provide a very efficient and effective means of ensuring that these stimulus funds are used to assist providers in the deployment of broadband networks in rural America. We've outlined these changes in the BIP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that we have posted on www.broadbandusa.gov. Please refer to this site if you have any questions about our program. If you cannot find an answer to your question, please feel free to call our BIP Help Desk at 1-877-508-8364, or email us at BroadbandUSA@usda.gov and other applicants will be able to benefit from your question since we are likely to post it as an FAQ if we determine that others have the same question.

Of course, we all anxiously await the opportunity to begin receiving and reviewing the applications that we anticipate seeing in response to NOFA 2. And, we know that many interested parties have reached out to us in order to discuss NOFA 2 and their applications. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate everyone's meeting requests, and in fact, pursuant to the rules guiding us in the Recovery Act process,¹ we are not permitted to accommodate certain requests. Thus, we have developed a process which affords us the benefit of your input, as well as shares your thoughts with other interested parties.

Therefore, if you have thoughts or comments about NOFA 2, and would like to share them with us, we encourage you to submit them in the form of a letter addressed to me with the Subject Line: NOFA 2 Considerations. *We will immediately post these letters on the USDA Recovery Act website and broadbandusa.gov.* This will serve a two-fold purpose. First, we can ensure all that this process is completely transparent, which is a goal of this Administration. Second, others can benefit from the inquiries and comments and respond accordingly.

¹ On March 20, 2009, President Obama issued a memorandum for the heads of executive departments and agencies entitled "Ensuring Responsible Spending of Recovery Act Funds" which limits the communications regarding Recovery Act issues between executive officials and registered lobbyists. On July 24, 2009, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget issued additional guidance (OMB Memorandum M-09-24) limiting the ability of executive officials to communicate with registered lobbyists and others with interest in Recovery Act policies and applications. These directives are intended to balance the interests of the Administration to ensure a transparent process for implementing the Recovery Act and the needs of executive agencies to provide information to, and work with, applicants, potential applicants, and their representatives to ensure an orderly application process.

1400 Independence Ave, S.W. · Washington DC 20250-0700
Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."
To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights,
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (Voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).