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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 25, 2018

COMMITTEES:  
AGRICULTURE  
APPROPRIATIONS  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS  
INDIAN AFFAIRS

Shawn Arner  
Deputy Assistant Administrator  
Rural Utilities Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
STOP 1597, Room 2844  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250-1597

Dear Mr. Arner:

I am writing to ask that you give due consideration for the application submitted by BEK Communications Cooperative (BEK) to the Community Connect Grant program, administered by the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). I appreciate your time and attention to this matter.


Over the past 66 years, BEK has served rural communities throughout North Dakota, providing vital services to connect our people and businesses to the rest of the world. BEK's significant investments in fiber-to-the-home broadband Internet service have allowed many North Dakotans to benefit from some of the fastest internet access in the nation.

As you may know, BEK successfully obtained a Community Connect Grant in 2014 to construct a fiber-based communications network in unserved areas of North Morton County. Today, the company has constructed more than 250 miles of fiber optics and invested \$3.5 million in the project to deliver high-quality broadband services to the residents and businesses there.

Now, BEK has identified areas of South Morton County that currently lack access to quality broadband through existing service providers. I am told that with the support of a Community Connect Grant, BEK's proposed fiber-based infrastructure project can bring access to additional economic and educational opportunities, improved health care, public safety assistance, and more, to the 250 residents, businesses, and critical community facilities that currently have no broadband option or struggle to find adequate service in South Morton County.

Accordingly, I request that you give full and fair consideration to BEK's application. Again, thank you for your time. Please keep me informed of the review process, and feel free to contact me with any updates or inquiries you may have.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven  
U.S. Senator