To NTIA Middle Mile Program Grant Administrators,

Having a robust, reliable fiber infrastructure is integral to educational institutions’ ability to provide students with appropriate access to the tools and resources they need for a quality education. Bandwidth capacity in some areas of (STATE/CITY/TOWN) has been a limiting factor in the level of education that our communities can support. Lack of quality connectivity hinders access to important online resources and the availability of remote learning.

While we are enthusiastic about the federal government’s focus on bridging the digital divide through the funding of middle mile projects. Given the critical role that access to reliable, high quality Internet plays in accomplishing the lofty goals on the stimulus funding initiative, it is critically important to ensure that these networks are operated in a sustainable manner by credible, experienced service providers.

What we appreciate about this application is that it will be operated by a service provider with more than 20 years of experience building and operating fiber-based networks in this area. FirstLight has experience operating federally funded, open access networks so it understands and complies with the obligations set forth by the NTIA. FirstLight also has a proven experience designing, building and operating fiber networks. In fact, FirstLight has consistently built thousands of routes miles each year and successfully built 4,000 route miles during the height of the pandemic.

FirstLight is able to do this because it maintains in-house fiber construction teams and has obtained commitments from its key supply vendors to ensure that it has access to the essential materials necessary to build the middle mile project contemplated in its grant application. This will ensure that FirstLight will be able to overcome the many challenges associated with large-scale fiber builds and will complete this project in an expeditious manner to provide the critical network backbone that the community desperately needs.

We endorse FirstLight’s NTIA Middle Mile Grant application and welcome the opportunity to collaborate further. (ORGANIZATION NAME) believes that this proposal will help our state achieve its objective to provide equitable access to high quality connectivity services. We encourage FirstLight to proceed with this initiative and request that the NTIA charged with reviewing this proposal favorably recommend FirstLight for funding and implementation.

Thank you for your consideration,

(SENDER INFORMATION)