UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Telecommunications and
Information Administration
Washington, D.C. 20230

The Honorable Betsey Markey
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

MAY 19 2009

Dear Representative Markey:

Thank you for your letter to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) regarding the broadband initiatives in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act). As you know, Section 6001 of the Recovery Act requires NTIA, in consultation with the Federal Communications Commission, to establish the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). The statute sets forth several priorities, including accelerating broadband deployment in both unserved and underserved areas, and ensuring that strategic institutions that are likely to create jobs or provide significant public benefits have broadband connections.

I appreciate the view expressed by you and your colleagues that NTIA should implement the BTOP in a manner that defines Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) as unserved or underserved. On March 12, 2009, NTIA released a *Request for Information* (RFI) that seeks public comment on a wide range of issues that will inform NTIA's decisionmaking as it develops its BTOP grant program. Among other things, the RFI seeks input on the appropriate definitions of "unserved" and "underserved" areas. Comments in response to the RFI were due to NTIA by April 13, 2009, and all public comments are publicly available at the BTOP website at www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants.

NTIA will make broadband grant funds available through a competitive process and expects to release its initial grant guidelines this summer, after which eligible entities will be able to apply for broadband stimulus funds. NTIA also will be hosting grant workshops to encourage and facilitate entities seeking to apply for grants. NTIA is moving expeditiously to implement this program to ensure that Recovery Funds are made available as quickly as possible.

In closing, I give you my personal assurance that your thoughtful views on this matter, which will be made part of the public record, are greatly appreciated and will receive serious consideration as NTIA implements this important program. If I may be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me or Jim Wasilewski, NTIA's Director of Congressional Affairs, at (202) 482-1551.

Sincerely,

Bernadette McGuire-Rivera

Bernadette McGuire-Rivera
Associate Administrator
Office of Telecommunications
and Information Applications