MID-HUDSON VALLEY RURAL BROADBAND ALLIANCE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR BIP AND BTOP

a) Opportunity the proposed system seeks to address. This shovel-ready project seeks to expand and enhance broadband access and capability in Ulster and Dutchess Counties in New York State. The proposed project will provide 100 Mbps broadband capability to six federally funded community health centers operated by the Institute for Family Health in Ellenville, New Paltz, Kingston and Hyde Park. The provision of this service in these areas will permit residents, businesses, and service providers in these upstate communities to access greater broadband capability, and thereby access Internet information and services not currently available to them. Increased broadband service will also enable approximately 35,000 Institute patients to access a web-based patient portal to review their medical records and communicate directly with their physicians; support the development and implementation of an electronic health record system (EHR) at the Ellenville Regional Hospital, a designated rural critical access hospital; and provide the Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center (CH-AHEC) increased capacity to offer webinars and other Internet-based continuing education programs to health care providers throughout the area. The proposed project will create ten (10) new jobs in the service area. In addition, twenty-two (22) jobs would be preserved in the Institute’s IT/EHR department. While the service area benefits from the Institute’s current broadband capacity at its New York City offices, the proposed broadband expansion will lay the foundation for future Smart Grid implementation. It will improve patient care throughout the Institute’s network by improving its electronic health record capability, and enhancing its practice management capability. It will also permit the Institute to offer community-based training for its patient portal “MyChart” and to teach residents to effectively use the Internet to obtain reliable health information, including providing a direct link to the National Library of Medicine’s MedLine Plus.

b) A general description of the proposed funded service areas (location, number of communities, etc.). The service area lies within the 22nd Congressional District for the State of New York, including Ulster and Dutchess Counties, where the health care facilities are located in the communities of Ellenville, New Paltz, Kingston and Hyde Park. This service area includes approximately eighty-eight (88) cities, towns and villages including: Accord, Amenia, Beacon, Beekman, Clinton, Clinton Corners, Clintondale, Connelly, Cottekill, Cragmoor, Denning, Dover, East Fishkill, Ellenville, Esopus, Fishkill, Gardiner, Glasco, Glenford, Grahamsville, Greenfield Park, Hardenburg, High Falls, Highland, Highmount, Hurley, Hyde Park, Kerhonkson, Kingston, LaGrange, Lake Hill, Lake Katrine, Lloyd, Marlboroton, Marlborough, Milan, Milton, Millbrook, Millerton, Modena, Mount Marion, Mount Tremper, Napanoch, Newburgh, New Paltz, North East, Olive, Olive Bridge, Pawling, Phoenicia, Pine Hill, Pine Plains, Plattekill, Pleasant Valley, Port Ewen, Poughkeepsie, Red Hook, Rhinebeck, Rifton,
Rochester, Rosendale, Ruby, Salt Point, Saugerties, Shandaken, Shawangunk, Shokan, Spring Glen, Staatsburg, Stanford, Stone Ridge, Tillson, Tivoli, Ulster, Ulster Park, Union Vale, Walker Valley, Wallkill, Wappinger, Wappingers Falls, Washington, Wawarsing, West Camp, West Hurley, West Park, West Shokan, Willow, and Woodstock. c) Number of households and businesses passed. Broadband coverage at 3 to 6 Mbps for the service area is currently provided by vendors. This expansion project will provide for enhanced broadband to 100 Mbps, thus expanding the broadband infrastructure for the service area and making available such speeds to other subscribers, including households and businesses. d) Number of community anchor institutions, public safety agencies, and critical community organizations passed and/or involved in the project. There are eight (8) community anchor institutions. Six of these are federally funded community health centers operated by the Institute for Family Health, including the Family Health Center of Ellenville, Family Practice Center of Kingston/Mid-Hudson Family Practice Residency Training Program, Family Health Center of New Paltz, Family Practice Center of Hyde Park, Family Health Center of Port Ewen, and the Ob-Gyn and Specialty Care Center of Kingston. Others include the Ellenville Regional Hospital and the Catskill-Hudson Area Health Education Center located in Highland, New York. All of these serve as public safety agencies and as critical community organizations and provide health care, education, and training to both students and to the public. e) Proposed services and applications for the proposed service areas and users. Proposed services and applications include the extension of the applicant’s electronic health record (EHR) and practice management system in order to provide improved quality of care, treatment and diagnosis by health care professionals to patients. In addition, services and applications which allow patients to search for important health information will be provided. Moreover, applications for health profession students, family practice residents, and practicing health professionals will permit access to educational materials, training and lectures from the anchor institutions, greatly enhancing education and training opportunities for health practitioners throughout the region. f) Approach to addressing the non-discrimination and interconnection obligations. The service area facilities are existing federally qualified health centers, and therefore comply with all non-discrimination and interconnection rules and guidelines. In addition, the applicant has, as a central mission, the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes, and serves as the leader of a national Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities funded by the CDC REACH US program. As part of this program, the Institute ran focus groups and identified issues that contribute to health disparities and distrust of the health care system. As a result, the applicant recognized that EHRs, when placed in the service of underserved communities, offer tremendous potential to improve health outcomes and to aid in reducing disparities. The Institute’s implementation of its EHR system incorporated these findings to develop a user friendly system designed to improve health outcomes. g) Type of broadband system that will be deployed (network type and technology standard). This project will deploy a Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network type and Ethernet technology. h) Qualifications of the applicant that demonstrate the ability to implement and operate a broadband infrastructure, and/or be a sustainable broadband services provider. The Institute already has broadband infrastructure and has achieved sustainability for the current level of broadband. However, the enhanced broadband capability will permit improved services to be provided within the framework of the applicant’s business model. The implementation will be accomplished with the Institute’s in-house information technology department. Weston Willett, Chief Information Officer, provides leadership to all of the Institute’s information technology initiatives in order to improve cost
effectiveness and health care service quality. He manages the Institute’s electronic health records and information management system, overseeing distributed and centralized clinical and business operations. Prior to joining the Institute, Mr. Willett worked with Kaiser Permanente, APMC, and MedPartners in the management of the Epic system. The Senior Applications Engineer, Jonah Piascik, is responsible for strategic and tactical planning management of the Epic systems environment since the Institute implemented its electronic health record system. He has over 10 years’ experience as a programmer and systems engineer. i) Overall infrastructure cost of the broadband system. The overall projected cost of the enhancement to the existing broadband system is approximately $10.4 million ($10,416,611.00). j) Overall expected subscriber projections for this project. Funding for this project will provide the enhancement necessary to greatly increase the number of community residents, businesses and service providers who have access to high speed broadband service. The system will be used by 35,000 patients making 150,000 health care visits per year, 50 health care providers, and 20 family practice residents. At the Ellenville Regional Hospital, it will serve 12,000 emergency room visits, and at the Catskill-Hudson AHEC it will serve 40 students and 180 health practitioners per year. k) Number of jobs estimated to be created or saved as a result of the project. As a result of the broadband enhancement, fully ten (10) new jobs will be created in the service area. In addition, as a result of the greater computer capability, fully twenty-two (22) jobs will be preserved on the IT/EHR team.