

Resolution Supporting Funding for Oversight of the NTIA Broadband Technology Opportunities Program and RUS Broadband Initiatives Program

WHEREAS, The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) have made the final Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) and Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) grant and loan awards as directed under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009; *and*

WHEREAS, The NTIA, through the ARRA, has distributed nearly \$4 billion in BTOP grant and loan awards for 233 projects in all 50 States, the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories; *and*

WHEREAS, The RUS, through the ARRA, has distributed \$3.5 billion in BIP grant, loan, and grant/loan combination awards for 320 projects in 46 States and one U.S. territory and to four national and multi-region satellite projects; *and*

WHEREAS, The State Members of the Joint Conference on Advanced Telecommunications Services have created a national clearinghouse on broadband projects and programs (www.broadbandbestpractices.org), including those funded by the BTOP and BIP grant and loan awards, that has been linked to the NTIA and RUS Broadband USA websites; *and*

WHEREAS, The Continuing Budget Resolution (CR) passed by the House and Senate for funding the federal government until December 3, 2010, did not include the additional \$10 million in FY 2010 supplemental appropriations requested by the White House for NTIA oversight of the BTOP and broadband mapping grants; *and*

WHEREAS, NTIA has begun re-assigning some of the staff members who worked on the BTOP awards process to other positions within the agency and elsewhere in the U.S. Department of Commerce; *and*

WHEREAS, It is important to the States' interest in deploying broadband infrastructure to unserved and underserved areas and in promoting broadband adoption that NTIA and RUS provide sufficient ongoing oversight of the BTOP and BIP grant and loan awards to ensure that the broadband projects and programs are completed and implemented on time, on budget, and deliver the promised economic and social benefits; *and*

WHEREAS, There are no guarantees that Congress will pass the FY2011 budget by December 3, 2010 or that the final FY 2011 budget will include the requested funding for the NTIA and RUS to oversee and evaluate the BTOP and BIP funded projects and programs; *now, therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 2010 Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, urges Congress to ensure NTIA and RUS have adequate funds to continue oversight of the BTOP and BIP grant and loan awards, before the CR expires on December 3, 2010, either through a supplement to any successor CRs or by enactment of the FY 2011 budget.

Sponsored by the Committee on Telecommunications

Recommended by the NARUC Board of Directors November 16, 2010

Adopted by the NARUC Committee of the Whole November 17, 2010