

Greater MN Jobs and Economic Development Finance Division
Chair, Representative Gene Pelowski
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
State Office Building, Room 491
Saint Paul, MN 55155



Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition
305 North Main Street
Winthrop, MN 55396

April 27, 2020

Dear Chair Pelowski and Committee Members,

On behalf of our more than 90 members, the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition writes to show our support for the Delete Everything Amendment to **HF 3029**. This amendment would appropriate an additional **\$10 million in the Border-to-Border Broadband Grant Program** in addition to \$10 million in reimbursement grant programs for our schools and healthcare providers. Every Minnesotan should have access to world-class, affordable broadband in their home or business. This moves us closer to achieving that goal.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that we need broadband now more than ever. This is especially true in our rural communities, many of which have been unserved or underserved for many years. Broadband is the critical infrastructure that allows us to work, learn, receive care, and communicate with friends and family while maintaining life-saving social distancing.

Hundreds of businesses across the state are now offering free Wi-Fi that is accessible in their parking lots, and ISPs have deployed temporary connectivity technology to ensure as many people have access as possible. The Coalition is grateful for their leadership and generosity. But these temporary fixes should not be conflated with permanent solutions, which is why additional funding to the Border-to-Border Broadband Grant Program in HF 3029 is so important.

Thank you for considering HF 3029 and we urge you to pass this legislation swiftly.

Respectfully yours,

Vince Robinson
Chair
Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition