



May 9th, 2022

Senator Torrey Westrom  
Representative Mike Sundin  
Members of Omnibus Agriculture, Housing, and Broadband Conference Committee

Dear Members of the Conference Committee,

The Minnesota Cable Communications Association appreciates the support of the committee for broadband provisions in the Agriculture, Housing, and Broadband Conference Committee, specifically:

- **Line extension program:** The Senate bill includes language from SF3476/HF3605 to ensure we are not leaving small areas of homes/businesses behind as we work to finish the job of connecting the state to broadband. This language creates an additional tool for the Office of Broadband (OBD) to help reach small pockets of unserved homes. These addresses often show up on maps as served because they are so close to infrastructure. The language allows for a constituent driven process to identify and connect some of the most difficult areas to serve. Right now, current broadband programs are not scaled small enough to reach 1 or 2 addresses.
- **Easements:** The Senate bill includes language from SF3476/HF3605 to give all broadband providers the same easement rights. It also includes clarifying language to the previous law requested by the railroads.
- **Broadband funding:** MN Cable believes it is crucial that federal funds be routed through our state's proven and efficient Border to Border grant program. This ensures funds are targeted toward the households and businesses that lack broadband access. We are supportive of general funds being added to the Border-to-Border account.

We also want to address any concerns around the line extension bill. This will not replace the Border-to-Border program -- it acts as a complement to it. It is meant to address totally different situations and give OBD the ability to reach areas the larger programs and builds will leave behind. The goal of the two programs is the same: connect all Minnesotans to broadband. The language is permissive - it does not "force" the Office of Broadband to do anything. We are open to capping the line extension program to alleviate concerns.

Minnesota Cable shares the goal of legislators in increasing broadband access across the state. Our members actively pursue ways to serve the most difficult and expensive areas, and we have made significant progress. In addition to our over \$1.5 billion in private capital investments since 2011, cable providers have completed over \$22 million in projects across the state using Minnesota's Border to Border Broadband grant funds to serve an additional 8,452 households previously unserved or underserved. Multiple MN Cable members will also leverage federal broadband funds

to reach thousands more unserved homes in Minnesota over the next few years. Together these sources will help complete our shared mission of ubiquitous access to broadband across Minnesota.

We look forward to continuing partnering with you and appreciate the Committee's support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Boroff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Anna Boroff  
Executive Director