Nanette S. Edwards, *Executive Director*

Community Anchor Institutions

Ref: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program requirements for South Carolina

The South Carolina Broadband Office (SCBBO), under the Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) is reaching out regarding future funding opportunities for Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) grant program. This memo serves as a formal request for your support and input around CAIs pertaining to industries for which you're affiliated.

Background: The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has conditionally awarded $551 million to South Carolina to expand Internet Access throughout the State. As part of this allocation, the SCBBO has developed a 5-year plan available for review on the ORS website located here: https://ors.sc.gov/sites/ors/files/Documents/Broadband/BEAD/SC%20BEAD%20Five-Year%20Action%20Plan%20(FINAL%202023-08-25).pdf

Our next step toward securing these federal dollars on behalf of the State is to work with stakeholders to inventory all CAIs, obtain their locations (latitude and longitude of the physical structure), the technology available and the level of service that's possible at the facility location. **Note, if the SCBBO does not have the location and requested attribute data represented in the CAI dataset, it will not be eligible for BEAD funding.** Locations that are not capable of receiving a minimum of 1 Gbps symmetric service or greater may be eligible for future grant funding under the BEAD program. Regardless of the status of the facility, this data must be aggregated across all CAIs and published to undergo a map challenge process (referred to as the BEAD Challenge process), which is required by NTIA.

The SCBBO must describe how the BEAD Challenge process will occur as part of an initial proposal that must be published by November of this year and delivered to the NTIA by late December. Additionally, included as part of the initial proposal will be the list of entities for which the office coordinated to obtain CAI data to support the BEAD challenge process. As a result, we have identified you and your team as likely candidates to help support this effort. **We ask that you please confirm you are the correct point of contact and/or provide an alternate contact that can assist the State with this time-sensitive task.**

Attached is a spreadsheet illustrating the types of CAI's, by category, the SCBBO is working toward aggregating. SCBBO is planning to schedule web calls with all stakeholders so please be on the lookout for emails coming from our office. We are requesting data in a spreadsheet format back from each stakeholder and our goal is to have all CAI data compiled final review and inclusion in the State's Initial Proposal to the NTIA. Please contact the SCBBO at broadband@ors.sc.gov, including the subject line CAI with questions.