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Contact: Matt Sweeney, 608-266-9600

matthew.sweeney@wisconsin.gov

Governor Evers, PSC Announce Opening of 2021 Broadband Expansion Grants

Applications for \$24 million in funding will be accepted through December 1

MADISON-On Tuesday, Governor Tony Evers and Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq announced the opening of the 2021 Broadband Expansion Grant round. \$24 million in funding is available to projects that will expand high-speed broadband internet to unserved and underserved areas of the state.

"With many working from home, some of our kids and educators doing distance learning, and accessing healthcare through telemedicine sometimes as the only option, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored how critically important broadband is to our state," said Governor Evers. "We need to use this funding to target those most affected by this pandemic and get them connected."

"We are strongly committed to the continued equitable expansion of broadband services to meet the needs of all communities and residents in Wisconsin," said Chairperson Valcq. "Access to high-speed broadband internet is essential for participation in modern society and to achieve community, public safety, learning, health, and economic goals in Wisconsin."

This is the second round of funding that was appropriated in the 2019-2021 state biennial budget. The available grant funding is equal to the 2020 grant round which, at the time, was more funding offered than all the seven previous rounds combined.

The 2019-2021 biennial budget, which was signed by the Governor Evers last year, provided \$48 million over the biennium for broadband expansion grants. For the 2020 round of funding, the PSC received 143 applications requesting \$50.3 million for large and small projects. In March of this year, the PSC awarded 72 grants to extend high-speed internet access to as many as 3,182 businesses and 46,537 homes, including 39,778 locations that are currently unserved.

The broadband expansion grants aim to help private companies find a path to return on investment in areas of the state that are challenging to serve. Since 2014, 210 grants

have been awarded, and have connected or are in the process of connecting over 7,000 businesses and 117,000 homes to high-speed broadband internet service.

Click [here](#) for application materials and more information about the Broadband Expansion Grant Program and past recipients.

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