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State seeks bids for Connecting NH- Emergency Broadband Expansion Program

CONCORD- The New Hampshire Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI), in conjunction with the New Hampshire Department of Education (DOE) and Public Utilities Commission (PUC), today announced a Request for Proposals for the Connecting NH- Emergency Broadband Expansion Program. Gov. Chris Sununu launched the new program this month using \$50 million from the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund. Connecting NH is seeking proposals from qualified applicants to provide high speed internet connectivity (25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload (25/3)) to as many unserved New Hampshire properties as possible at the least cost to the State.

The Connecting New Hampshire – Emergency Broadband Expansion Program will address challenges for students participating in remote learning, individuals working remotely, as well as other Granite Staters utilizing the internet to access telehealth services, including vital mental health services.

“This public-private partnership is a smart investment for communities across the Granite State in expanding broadband access,” said Governor Chris Sununu. “As more Granite Staters are learning and working remotely, and using the internet to access telehealth services, this vital expansion program ensures equitable access to service for Granite Staters.”

We need to be prepared for a possible spike in COVID-19 cases later this year,” added OSI Director Jared Chicoine. “Expanding broadband access will be vital for our response in education, remote working, and public health.”

“While New Hampshire schools have gained nationwide recognition for their switch to remote learning this spring, connectivity remains a challenge, particularly for students in rural New Hampshire communities,” said Education Commissioner Frank Edelblut. “Connecting NH will leverage available federal funds and private sector competition to bring vital broadband connectivity to Granite State students.”

“Broadband access has proven to be critical for New Hampshire citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said PUC Chairwoman Dianne Martin. “The Connecting NH- Emergency Broadband Expansion Program will provide that critical access to more New Hampshire citizens quickly.”

The program goal is to provide broadband connectivity to as many New Hampshire properties currently experiencing no or limited internet connectivity as possible at the least cost to the State. The program requires reliable service delivered at a minimum of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload (25/3 Mbps). To accomplish this priority, the project will:

1. Be technology-neutral
2. Work in a public/private partnership collaboration with existing providers and municipalities
3. The technology can be wired or wireless



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Projects must be completed as soon as possible, but no later than December 15, 2020.

Schedule of Events

Event	Date/Deadline	Time
RFP Issued	6/18/20	4:00 PM
Question Period Closes	6/22/20	4:00 PM
Responses to Questions Posted	6/25/20	4:00 PM
Proposal Due Date and Time	7/2/2020	4:00 PM
Anticipated Contract Start Date	Mid-July 2020	

The Request for Proposals is attached.