



*Department of Commerce*  
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
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Ian Martinez  
Senior Advisor and Director of Outreach, BTOP Program  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
Department of Commerce

Dear Mr. Martinez,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Broadband applications submitted by PTI Pacifica Inc., the University of Hawaii, and Pacific Islander Community Access Network.. To satisfy the need for a comprehensive assessment of the applications and their direct relationship to the community, the CNMI ARRA Office opted to host a forum in which each applicant was required to present to a panel of members which represented all three branches of the government and the private business sector. During this event, which took place on April 29, 2010, each of the applicants for the ARRA funding presented to panel members and upwards of 100 community members on the benefits of their project proposals. In addition, we allowed for public comments be sent via e-mail, which drew upwards of 50 additional comments and letters of support. To ensure that these presentations were leveraged for maximum impact, the forum was also made available to the community of Guam. Although Guam is a separate jurisdiction, the CNMI and Guam governments felt it was appropriate to leverage these projects to the benefit of the region as a whole, versus a single jurisdiction.

Based on evaluations submitted to my office after all presentations that were made in addition to public comments, the CNMI ARRA office is in a position to ***Highly Recommend*** the application for PTI Pacifica Inc. The applications made by the University of Hawaii and the Pacific Islands Community Access Network are ***Recommended***. Please find the summation of the application and community comments for each applicant.

**PTI Pacifica Inc.**

**Application ID: 7342, Application Type: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure**

This application proposes to build a dedicated high speed private broadband network for community anchor institutions on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam. The application proposes to create over 1400 direct, indirect, and induced jobs within the jurisdictions of the Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The proposed project will expand broadband infrastructure in areas of the region that are underserved.

This project fits in with current government priorities as the dedicated network and increase in broadband availability for government uses will aid the efficiencies within the region. This is especially critical in the area of emergency preparedness and response. Both the Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are located in a region which is historically susceptible to typhoons and earthquakes. The need to maintain efficient communication between the islands is of tremendous importance to the well being of the citizens of our jurisdiction. The other priority that the application

supports is in the area of medicine. Due to the remoteness of our islands, telemedicine has been sought after as a way to alleviate extraordinary costs associated with sending citizens to Hawaii for assessment and treatment. The funding of PTI Pacifica Inc's application will provide the infrastructure required to fully realize the implementation of this technology for our public health institutions.

**Pacific Islands Community Access Network**

**Application ID: 7798, Application Type: Sustainable Broadband Adoption**

This application did not receive full support from the community. There were many questions raised about the relevancy of the program to existing social services programs. In addition, many of the concepts this application proposed to bring to the community already exist.

**University of Hawaii Systems**

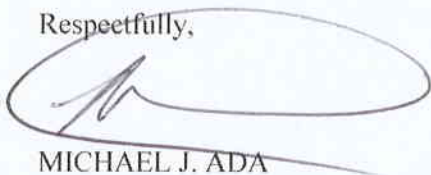
**Application ID: 5517, Application Type: Sustainable Broadband Adoption**

This application did not receive full support from the community. Much of the adoption efforts this project proposes do not address the general public, rather a segmented portion of the public.

I hope that these comments will be helpful in the NTIA's review of the many applications nationwide that you must consider for review. As in previous communication, I urge the NTIA to strongly consider the applications mentioned in this correspondence. In addition to aligning with the local governments priorities, this funding will go to support a federal initiative. With an impending US Department of Defense realignment of military bases from Japan into the islands of Guam and the CNMI, we seek to ensure that our infrastructure is well equipped to manage the needs of the anticipated growth. The funding of the highly recommended application seeks to ensure that our local governments are provided a strong and reliable network, while realizing significant reductions in costs to the public. The utilization of the ARRA funding for these purposes ensures that the CNMI and Guam is in a strong position to support the US Department of Defense's mission in realigning troops into the region.

Should you have any questions with respect to these comments, please feel free to contact me at (670) 664-3077 (office) or (670) 483-3015 (mobile). I sincerely appreciate the continued partnership that the NTIA has demonstrated with our islands.

Respectfully,



MICHAEL J. ADA  
Secretary of Commerce  
CNMI ARRA State Point of Contact