



AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT

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Pat M. Galea'i
Executive Director

Hon. Togiola T. A. Tulafono
Governor

Hon. Faoa A. Sunia
Lt. Governor

Via email to: imartinez@ntia.doc.gov

May 7, 2010

Serial No. 14-10

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications & Information Administration
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
U. S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D. C. 20230-0001

Re: State Review of BTOP Applications, 2nd Round (Winter 2010)

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

We very much appreciate the opportunity to comment on our Territory's applications for the second round of funding for the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). We strongly believe that the broadband initiative will have positive and enduring impact on American Samoa's economy. More precisely, it will – (1) improve education, health care, and public safety; (2) provide essential communication services to our rural communities; (3) spur business development; and (4) enhance government services.

Over the past 15 months, American Samoa has orchestrated a territorial-wide planning process for integrated, strategic broadband deployment involving a wide range of interests and entities. Representatives from service providers, public agencies, educational institutions, technology partners, and other stakeholders participated in our regular meetings. These meetings allowed numerous discussions and opportunities among broadband stakeholders ensuring cohesiveness in the broadband initiative. An outcome of our meetings was the development of the Territory's first Strategic Plan for Broadband Deployment and Information Technology Advancement.

We believe that our planning efforts have resulted in sustainable, cost efficient grant applications that offer comprehensive, efficacious solutions. The three applications contained in the NTIA data base also support multiple uses, including education and distance learning, health care and telemedicine, economic development, and renewable/sustainable energy expansion. The Territory of American Samoa firmly believes that these three projects will be prudent investments of federal funds from which American Samoa will receive immediate benefits, as well as enhancing the quality of life for many years to come.

The BTOP application of the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) entitled "Incubator Technology Training Program (ITTP) provides a vital personnel development and workforce training component to the Territory's already approved Broadband Improvement Program (BIP) grant application submitted by the American Samoa Telecommunications Authority (ASTCA). It

would significantly add to the sustainability of ASTCA's broadband deployment project by providing on an on-going basis certified workers trained in the pertinent broadband areas to properly maintain the systems being installed by ASTCA through its BIP activities.

Being the first ones prepared and submitted by a non-government entity, the two applications of Toa Communications, Inc. complement each other and would indubitably enhance private sector growth.

Once again, thank you for providing the Territory of American Samoa the opportunity to comment upon the broadband proposals. We are prepared to assist with the successful implementation of the projects selected by NTIA. Kindly contact my office if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Pat M. Galea'i', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

PAT M. GALEA'I
Executive Director