



July 13, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration

FROM: Ann C. Eilers *Chris Rose for*
Principal Assistant Inspector General for Audit and Evaluation

SUBJECT: Review of Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
Award to the Executive Office of the State of West Virginia

In response to a June 4, 2012, request from the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, Committee on Energy and Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives, we plan to review the \$126 million BTOP grant to the Executive Office of the State of West Virginia to bring high-speed Internet access to this underserved region by expanding the state's existing microwave public safety network and adding about 2,400 miles of fiber. The review is part of our continued oversight of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA's) broadband program.

The specific review objectives will be to (1) determine whether BTOP funds associated with the award are being properly and efficiently spent; (2) assess the process West Virginia used to apply for a BTOP grant and whether the application contained any material misrepresentations; and (3) review the process used to evaluate West Virginia's application, including any steps NTIA took to verify claims in the application. We will begin this review immediately and conduct our review at NTIA headquarters in Washington, DC, at recipient facilities in West Virginia, and other locations as needed.

We will discuss our review further at the entrance conference scheduled for July 19, 2012. Should you have any questions regarding our evaluation, please contact me or Chris Rose at (202) 482-5558.

cc: Ellen Herbst, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary
Anthony Wilhelm, Deputy Associate Administrator, Infrastructure Division,
Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications, NTIA
Milton Brown, Audit Liaison, NTIA
Kathy Smith, Chief Counsel, NTIA