

Dear Honorable [Tribal Leader]:

On behalf of Connect South Dakota, an initiative of the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), we're contacting you to understand and coordinate Federal funding available for broadband and digital equity.

Federal funding is now available under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity (DE) programs set forth by the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA). Tribal governments are also eligible for funding offered through the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program.

Utilizing BEAD and DE funding, the GOED is creating a Five-year Action Plan and Digital Equity Plan to guide the state's efforts to provide all South Dakotans with reliable broadband internet access, as well as the ability to meaningfully engage with the internet. These plans will help identify unique challenges [your Tribe] may be experiencing regarding access to and adoption of high-speed internet. Where possible, GOED would like to coordinate possible strategies to address these challenges.

We request permission to proceed in this unified effort with a formal Tribal consultation.

During the Tribal consultation (if one is granted), we look forward to the following:

- Coordinate on State and Tribal high-speed internet expansion plans and implementation timelines.
- Gain an understanding of Tribal high-speed internet deployment activities to date and future priorities for deployment.
- Gain an understanding of existing digital equity efforts and any plans in place to support broadband access and adoption.
- Identify specific needs around digital equity and access, along with potential solutions.

We welcome further discussion and coordination through one-on-one consultations with the [Tribe]. We anticipate holding these consultations in June 2023. You may request a one-on-one consultation by contacting our team via email at [insert email] or by phone at [insert phone].

We will finalize our planning effort and submit the five-year Action Plan and Digital Equity Plan to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) by the end of summer 2023. The state of South Dakota and the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity look forward to working with [your Tribal] community.

Sincerely,