



November 12, 2021

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

SUBJECT: NCLGA Resolution R2

Dear Minister LeBlanc,

Established in 1955, the North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) is the voice of local governments in North Central British Columbia representing over 240 elected officials in 39 local governments.

At our 2021 AGM & Convention on May 5 & 6, NCLGA members debated 2021 member and executive resolutions related to important local government issues. We would like to bring to your attention NCLGA Resolution R2, titled "*Ensuring Access to Broadband and Cellular Services in BC*," which highlights the importance of the BC and federal government investing in developing the capital infrastructure necessary to deliver cost effective broadband services in rural and remote communities when the business case does not exist for the private sector.

Due to the high cost of installing the fibre-optic or co-axial cable to each home or organization in rural and remote communities, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) may decide not to invest in the infrastructure given the length of time to receive a return on their investment. As a result, many of these communities do not have reliable broadband or cellular service for work, school, health services, and connecting with family and friends.

While senior governments currently offer grant assistance for this infrastructure, NCLGA recommends that the federal and provincial government build, maintain and own the infrastructure for rural and remote areas of BC that are not serviced by current ISP's. They could lease the lines to ISP's for a reasonable cost to recover some of the costs to build the infrastructure. All parties would benefit – government, ISPs and communities.

The NCLGA would like the opportunity to discuss this resolution (see below) with you. Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your reply.

Respectfully,

Cori Ramsay
NCLGA President

Enclosed: NCLGA Resolution R2

CC: Chair Wagner, Cariboo Regional District

R2 – Ensuring Access to Broadband and Cellular Services in BC

Whereas broadband and cellular services are essential components of sustainable, resilient, and vibrant communities;

And whereas there are still considerable impediments to overcome in looking to the private sector providing meaningful, cost effective service to rural and remote communities:

Therefore be it resolved that NCLGA and UBCM lobby the federal and provincial governments to directly invest in the ownership and development of the needed capital infrastructure to facilitate effective, efficient and cost effective broadband services in rural and remote communities where a private sector business case does not exist.