



Testimony of

George White, Deputy Secretary for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Sue Suleski, Director, Office of Administration, Broadband Initiatives

before the

Senate Communications and Technology Committee

regarding

American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Moneys for Broadband

Senate Communications & Technology Committee Meeting

October 3, 2012 - 9:30 a.m. - Hearing Room 8 E-A, East Wing

Chairman Folmer, Chairman Farnese and members of the committee – good morning. I am George White, the Deputy Secretary for Information Technology and the Chief Information Officer of the Commonwealth. With me today is Sue Suleski – our Director of Broadband Initiatives. Thank you for inviting us here today to provide you with an update on the state’s efforts to advance broadband technology in Pennsylvania and answer any questions you may have about our initiatives.

As you are aware, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania received two grant awards from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, otherwise known as ARRA, totaling \$36.1 million. Of this total, \$28.8 million was allocated for an initiative known as the Middle Mile Project. The balance, \$7.3 million, was directed at several initiatives that in the aggregate were referred to as the Broadband Mapping and Planning Project.

The Middle Mile Project is focused on deploying a 150 Mbps network in the 32-county region north of Interstate 80. This project builds on our existing microwave network which is used as part of the PA Statewide Radio Network or PA STARNet. Once fully deployed, it will be made available to last mile providers that provide the technology that carries signals from the broadband network to homes and

businesses and various anchor institutions such as schools, hospitals, and governments' locations to help expand broadband capabilities in these primarily rural counties. This project is scheduled for completion by the end of January 2013.

The Broadband Mapping and Planning Project is comprised of a number of different sub-projects. Most of the effort to date has been concentrated on the broadband mapping initiative which involves the collection and geo-coding of information related to existing broadband technologies deployed throughout Pennsylvania. Other components of this project include the development of a strategic plan and the provision of technical assistance to entities to help drive adoption of broadband technology and research. The Mapping and Planning Project is scheduled for completion in December 2014.

In the past, responsibilities for these grants were shared between the Office for Information Technology, the Department of Community & Economic Development, and the Office of Public Safety Radio Services. Now, the work is essentially split with the Office for Information Technology handling the Broadband Mapping and Planning Project and the Pennsylvania State Police, which assumed responsibility for the Office of Public Safety Radio Services on July 1, 2012, handling the Middle Mile Project.

I would now like to turn the balance of our testimony over to Sue Suleski, our Director for Broadband Initiatives.