



# THE FLORIDA OFFICE OF Economic Recovery



August 7, 2009

The Honorable Larry Strickling  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce  
Administrator, National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The Office of Economic Recovery supports the application of the Division of Library and Information Services of the Florida Department of State (the State Library) for grant funding under the National Telecommunications and Information Administration Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (NTIA BTOP).

The State Library and over 500 public libraries in Florida have long served as critical and essential access points for public computing. This grant funding will enable them to upgrade their internal computing capabilities to meet growing demand for Internet access. Florida has moved many government functions to E-government services which has been essential to handling the increased workloads in safety net services caused by the current recession. Enhanced public computing is also needed for our growing use of virtual schools and distance learning for students of all ages. It is important to note that in many communities, whether urban, suburban or rural, the public library is the only place for public access due to non-existent, limited or cost-prohibitive commercial broadband service.

The State Library has a solid track record in statewide projects and its working relationship with the public library community will be an important part of this project's success.

These numerous benefits to the state of Florida are in concert with the stated goals of the BTOP program as set forth in the NTIA Notice of Funding Opportunity released in the Federal Register on July 9, 2009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Winstead".

Don Winstead  
Special Advisor to the Governor