

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 14, 2021

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural  
Development, Food and Drug Administration  
Administration and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Hoeven  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural  
Development, Food and Drug  
Administration and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Baldwin and Ranking Member Hoeven,

As you work to develop the Fiscal Year 2022 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we write to express our strong support for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) grant program.

The DLT grant program assists rural and tribal communities in acquiring distance learning and telemedical technologies so that local teachers and medical service providers can connect to educators and medical professionals in other parts of the country. Since 1994, the DLT grant program has helped to establish hundreds of distance learning and telemedicine systems, improving the quality of life for thousands of residents in rural communities all across the United States.

DLT specifically helps rural communities invest in telecommunications-enabled information, audio and visual equipment, and advanced technologies to assist its residents in accessing educational and health care services. Recipients have used the program to provide distance learning paramedic courses to first responders, improve access to specialty health education, and establish partnerships between rural high schools and community colleges. Recent DLT recipients have used the grants to help address opioid abuse treatment and mental health counseling in rural America.

These educational and health services are vital. DLT grants enable rural communities to overcome any barriers they face in accessing healthcare or education, including long travel distances or a shortage of providers. Given the critical importance of these programs, we urge you to fund the USDA's Distance Learning and Telemedicine grant program at or above the President's request for FY22.

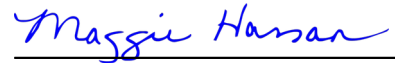
We appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



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Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



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Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator




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Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



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Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



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Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



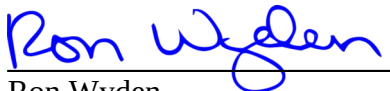
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Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



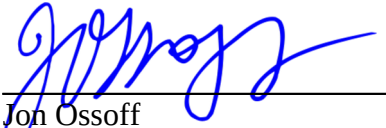
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Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



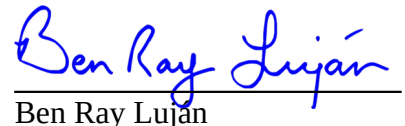
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Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator




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Jon Ossoff  
United States Senator



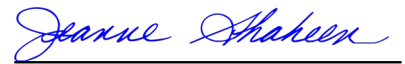
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Ben Ray Lujan  
United States Senator



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Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



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Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



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Mark Kelly  
United States Senator