Imagine Idaho Coalition
State and Federally Supported Broadband for Idaho’s Future
October 2020

Who We Are:
The Imagine Idaho Coalition was formed to ensure that every Idahoan has access to reliable broadband. The coalition is committed to serving Idaho communities and citizens by helping to promote state policy that favors communities in need of services and secure significant federal funding to deploy broadband-communications infrastructure in a pro-competitive way.

The Problem:
Idaho’s internet access ranges from inadequate to non-existent outside larger towns and cities, placing many Idahoans out of reach of economic prosperity. Idahoans have been reluctant to ask for their fair share of federal funding designed to solve for rural connectivity. Idaho’s share of all federal infrastructure grants since 2010 is 0.2%. Worse, disproportionate costs to delivering high speed internet to unserved and underserved areas leaves minimal incentives for incumbent carriers to close the broadband access divide. Limited community expertise and awareness of solutions create a difficult environment to apply for and deploy grant funding.

The Solution:
Beyond CARES Act and other federal resources now being deployed in Idaho, Congress is considering an unprecedented scale of broadband funding with as much as $100 billion for inclusion in forthcoming infrastructure legislation in 2021 – a portion which Idaho will qualify for. Given this opportunity, Imagine Idaho will deploy a three-track, federal and state initiative, awareness campaign, and education and community support strategy:

1) Represent Idaho communities with the State of Idaho, Congress, and federal agencies to communicate the need for federal resources to benefit Idahoans and for the state to allow local governments the express authority to build and own their own infrastructure.
2) Deploy a statewide awareness campaign and leverage coalition leaders to weigh in on the importance of broadband.
3) Provide education and support to communities developing and applying for federal funding as new opportunities for broadband funding become available.

Economic Benefits of Bridging the Digital Divide:
Better internet access throughout Idaho will create opportunities for innovation and modernization and, as is evident with the COVID-19 crisis, provide critical communication services and economic development that supports education, training, telemedicine, agriculture, working from home and new business centers.

The Coalition:
Imagine Idaho is assembling a coalition of statewide leaders and community partners from all sectors who care about improving connectivity in unserved and underserved areas of Idaho. This includes concerned citizens, municipal, county, and state leaders; industry leaders from across the economy including agriculture, healthcare, tourism, manufacturing, and technology; academic leaders from PreK-12 through higher education; research institutions; and economic development authorities.

What Imagine Idaho Coalition will do:
• Communicate with their networks and elected officials Imagine Idaho’s goals
• Deliver the Imagine Idaho message through earned and paid media
Participate:
As an *Imagine Idaho Coalition* Member we ask for you to:
1. Donate to fund this initiative for statewide success
2. List your organization name
3. Provide feedback and input as this project moves forward
4. Help us reach out to more state and community leaders and influencers
5. Sign letters of support to Congress, Idaho’s Governor and Idaho Legislators
6. Join our email list
7. Follow us on social media and share our posts (content)