

# United States Senate

September 16, 2019

Mr. Ed Roberson  
Utah State Director  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
440 West 200 South, Suite 500  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

Re: Emery Telcom Fiber Deployment in Grand and San Juan Counties

Dear Director Roberson,

As you know, Emery Telcom is working with various state and federal agencies to fulfill fiber deployment projects in rural Utah. The completion of this deployment will greatly enhance access to broadband, Internet, and cellular communications in rural parts of the state that are currently underserved. Given that associated federal funding is contingent upon completion of these projects within certain timeframes, I am writing to urge BLM to expedite its part of the permitting process.

The project timeframes are set by the funding agencies, such as Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). It is my understanding that each project requires permitting from federal agencies, including BLM. It is critical that any permitting delays be avoided to ensure that Emery can complete the builds on time and prevent the loss of federal dollars supporting these projects.

The relevant initiatives currently awaiting permitting are as follows:

1. **Fiber Build from Salt Lake City to Grand Junction** – Emery Telcom is working with the Utah Department of Transportation and the Colorado Department of Transportation to construct a fiber line from Salt Lake City to Denver. Emery Telcom's portion of the project consists of everything west of Grand Junction, Colorado. This project will assist in smart vehicle and smart truck transport initiatives from both states, and has a proposed completion timeline of May 2021. This project involves both U.S. Forest Service and BLM lands.
2. **Utah Education and Telehealth Network Project in San Juan County** – Emery Telcom is working with the Utah Education and Telehealth Network (UETN) to install fiber to schools in White Mesa, Bluff, and Montezuma Creek, Monument Valley, and Navajo Mountain, Utah. This project leverages federal education funding and has a two-year timeline to completion. It is important that the State of Utah take advantage of these federal funds to defray the cost of building fiber to these schools. This project involves both tribal and BLM land.

MITT ROMNEY  
UTAH

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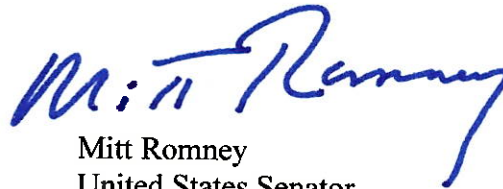
## United States Senate

- 3. USDA Project** – Emery Telecom has received grants under the USDA Community Connect program to connect the under or unserved communities of Castle Valley, La Sal, Mexican Hat, and Halchita, Utah. These projects also have a two-year funding window. The projects include tribal, BLM and U.S. Forest Service lands.

I encourage BLM to work with all of the permitting agencies involved and with Emery Telcom to complete permitting for these specific projects within their respective deadlines. This will ensure continued federal funding to deploy essential broadband fiber facilities in rural Utah.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter and for your continued partnership in this effort. Please contact Clay Crozier (435-823-4302, [clay\\_crozier@romney.senate.gov](mailto:clay_crozier@romney.senate.gov)) in my office with any further questions or updates.

Sincerely,



Mitt Romney  
United States Senator

CC: Brian Mueller, Acting Field Director, Moab Field Office, BLM  
Gary Torres, Field Manager, Monticello Field Office, BLM