

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eastern Ontario Federal MPs Voice Strong Support for Cellular Improvements
Mobile broadband critical to regional growth

The Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) is pleased that all Members of Parliament representing the region, and from across party lines, have signed strong letters of support to the federal government to help fund proposed cell service improvements for the region.

EORN is proposing a \$213 million public-private partnership to improve both the reach and quality of cellular data services in rural Eastern Ontario, which is essential for business investment, jobs and quality of life.

About one quarter of the area where there are homes, businesses or major roads in the region cannot access any cellular services. And many areas don't have enough capacity to meet growing demand for mobile broadband. These gaps are the result of market failure. A public-private partnership would reduce carriers' infrastructure costs, creating a stronger business case to improve services.

The project is seeking one-third of the funding from the federal government, one-third from the provincial government and one-third from mobile carriers. Municipal governments across the region have already approved and/or contributed funds for technical work needed for the project.

The incoming Ontario Government committed to the province's share of \$71 million during the election campaign.

In two separate letters, all MPs from the region are urging the federal government to provide its \$71 million share for the project.

About EORN

EORN, a non-profit created by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC), helped to improve broadband access to nearly 90% of Eastern Ontario through a \$175 million fixed broadband network funded by the federal, provincial and municipal governments and private sector service providers. It works with governments and community organizations to improve and leverage broadband access to fuel economic growth across the region.

(more)

Quotes

“We would like to express our thanks to all of our federal representatives for their strong support for the project. EORN has a proven track record of delivering outstanding results in collaboration with the federal, provincial and municipal governments, and the private sector.”

- *EORN Chair J. Murray Jones*

“We welcome this support from our MPs. The backing from across the political spectrum demonstrates just how important this cell project is for the future of our region. We are hopeful that the federal government will listen and fund this critical project.”

- *EOWC Chair Robin Jones*

“We know how the cell phone gap negatively impacts the growth of the businesses within SDG. The strong support already garnered from across the region highlights how important and necessary this infrastructure is.”

- *SDG County Warden, Ian McLeod*

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