**Monroe County Receives Telecommuter Forward! Community Certification**

Monroe County has been certified as a Telecommuter Forward! Community by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. The Telecommuter Forward! Certification recognizes local units of government that have met criteria for promoting telecommuting opportunities in partnership with broadband providers, economic development professionals, and the State Broadband Office.

2017 Act 342 created Wisconsin’s Telecommuter Forward! Community certification program and it became the first-in-the-nation state program to promote telecommuting.

In order to become certified, Wisconsin cities, villages, towns or counties must adopt a resolution that includes a statement of support and commitment to promote telecommuting. The resolution must also designate a single point of contact for coordinating telecommuting opportunities. The resolution will contain the responsibilities of the single point of contact, including coordinating and partnering with telecommuting stakeholders, and collaborating with broadband providers and employers.

“The need for access to reliable, high-speed broadband is no longer a luxury, but a necessity,” said Governor Tony Evers. “We recognize that broadband access is critical for a modern commercial environment, enabling businesses to reach customers and suppliers, and permitting individuals to work from home.”

In 2014, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin began awarding Broadband Expansion Grants to underserved areas of the state, and in 2016 it began certifying communities that have taken steps to remove barriers to broadband infrastructure investment through the Broadband Forward! Program. Telecommuter Forward! Is the next chapter in Wisconsin's broadband expansion story.

"Thanks to private and public investment in broadband infrastructure, Telecommuter Forward! Certification will serve as another economic development tool to promote the vitality of Wisconsin's communities," said Public Service Commission of Wisconsin Chairperson Rebecca Cameron Valcq.

For communities interested in the Telecommuter Forward! Community Certification, or those who would like information on services offered by the State Broadband Office, please visit: <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/Programs/WBO.aspx>