

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

Press Release

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Baker-Polito Administration Announces New Leadership Team for Last Mile Broadband Project

*Special Advisor to the Secretary, and Implementation Liaison, will lead high-speed internet accessibility efforts in Western Massachusetts*

Boston – Thursday, May 5, 2016 – The Baker-Polito Administration announced today the appointment of two new senior staff members, charged with leading the Last Mile Broadband Project for communities un- or underserved by high-speed internet access in Western Massachusetts.

Peter J. Larkin will serve as Special Advisor to the Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, overseeing planning and strategy for the Last Mile project. Larkin will assume the role of Chairman of the Board of the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, the quasi-public entity charged with executing the Last Mile project. Bill Ennen will serve as the Last Mile Implementation Liaison, and will be based in Western Massachusetts to assist Larkin in local community engagement and planning. Both appointments are effective immediately.

“We are committed to facing the challenges presented by the Last Mile project and are confident in the abilities of Peter and Bill to refocus and administer the strategy that is necessary,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “We understand the importance of high-speed internet access to our communities and these appointments will bring new capacity, and collaborative, on-the-ground, engagement, to the Last Mile project.”

“Peter Larkin and Bill Ennen will play essential roles in our efforts to move rural broadband expansion planning forward,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “We are thankful for their service on this vital project.”

“The size and scope of the Last Mile project are significant, and as with any complex capital project, clear communication, creative thinking, budget discipline, and problem solving are essential,” said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash. “In conducting a deep-dive assessment of the status of the Last Mile project, we recognize there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the project's technical, legal, and financial challenges. We are committed to close community collaboration as Peter and Bill bring their expertise to the table.”

Peter J. Larkin brings over 25 years of public and private sector experience to the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. He was most recently a principal at Public Policy Advisors. Previously, he was Chief Operating Officer and Senior Vice President of the Massachusetts Biotechnology Council, and Senior Vice President for Government Relations at ML Strategies. From 1990 to 2005, he represented Pittsfield in the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

Bill Ennen will transition from his current role at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, where he serves as program director for the John Adams Innovation Institute. In this role, Bill has been deeply involved in community-based and regional economic development efforts, including the Holyoke Innovation District, the Haverhill Partnership Initiative, and the South Coast Entrepreneurship for All program.

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