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**Broadband project ends frequent blackouts in Gallup and
McKinley County**

Project funded by state broadband office assures consistent connectivity

ALBUQUERQUE – The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) announced today that a critical broadband project designed to eliminate high-speed internet outages in Gallup and surrounding McKinley County is complete.

The project's completion is the result of a partnership between OBAE, Lumen Technologies and Ethos Broadband and means tens of thousands of residents in Gallup and McKinley County will no longer see frequent high-speed internet blackouts.

“This upgrade reduces isolated outages and keeps families connected to critical health information and everyday necessities, including electronic payments like EBT,” said **Sen. George Muñoz**, who represents the region hit by the past blackouts. “New Mexico should be proud to invest in rural infrastructure with the same seriousness we bring to urban connectivity, because resilience is not a zip-code privilege.”

“High-speed internet is not a luxury,” said **Rep. Leger Fernández**. “For years, families, schools, and small businesses in Gallup and McKinley County have lived with unreliable internet that cut them off from school, work, health care, and opportunity. That’s why I fought to make sure our rural and Tribal communities weren’t left behind through the historic American Rescue Plan Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. I applaud the State’s efforts to fill in the gaps in broadband access. When we invest in broadband infrastructure and access, we’re not just connecting New Mexicans to the internet—we’re building the foundation for our children’s success and a good life.”

“Strengthening broadband access across our communities is critical, and the completion of this project represents a major step forward,” said **Sen. Ben Ray Luján**. “This project will deliver

more reliable broadband to thousands of New Mexicans in Gallup and McKinley County by improving service reliability in areas impacted by frequent outages. I am grateful for the New Mexico Broadband Office's commitment to ensuring every New Mexican can access affordable and reliable broadband.”

“This will ensure rural and Tribal communities will have access to the reliable broadband they need to create careers they can build their families around, help local small business owners boost their sales online, and provide the next generation with tools to succeed in their education and beyond,” said **Sen. Martin Heinrich**.

“This is a powerful and meaningful solution to stopping frequent outages in Gallup and McKinley County,” said **Jeff Lopez**, OBAE director. “Through tremendous teamwork with providers, we are ensuring that blackouts no longer cut off vital internet services, affecting businesses, schools and families.”

The main broadband connection from Albuquerque into Gallup is owned by Lumen Technologies, but fiber line cuts have disrupted service 11 times in the past 11 years.

Last March, OBAE committed \$500,000 to establish resiliency and contracted with Ethos Broadband to construct redundant connectivity via an alternate route. Ethos Broadband had built a separate fiber path through Gallup to serve its customers and the Navajo Nation. Lumen is leasing that Ethos Broadband route for its communications traffic, establishing a backup system for its main fiber line.

The completed work means the region has a secondary communications connection, so service will not be affected should the main line be cut. The project paves the way for a more connected and resilient community and demonstrates how similar projects could benefit other vulnerable areas in New Mexico.

“This is a significant step forward, as we are bringing an end to rural and Tribal communities feeling left behind in the digital age,” said **Nectarios “Neo” Nicolaou**, Ethos Broadband general manager. “This collaboration is pivotal, and together, we are paving the way for a more connected and resilient community. We are committed to enhancing connectivity and making a lasting impact on the lives of the people we serve.”

“Lumen is pleased to be completing a new, more resilient fiber route between Albuquerque and Gallup, bringing much needed redundancy to a critical corridor in McKinley County,” said **Dan Sullivan**, Lumen Technologies account director. “We are grateful to the New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion for their collaboration and leadership in strengthening connectivity and ensuring long-term economic growth.”

Ethos Broadband is a rural telecommunications company based in Yatahey, New Mexico. Lumen Technologies, Inc. is a U.S. telecommunications company headquartered in Monroe, Louisiana.

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The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion is dedicated to serving New Mexico with a commitment to make high-speed broadband accessible to all New Mexicans. OBAE's mission is to expand and improve high-speed internet service with passionate leadership that drives

bold, equitable, affordable and inclusive broadband solutions. OBAE seeks results that honor the state's rich heritage and elevate quality of life for all.