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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Medina County Fiber Network Awarded \$1.6 Million from Recovery Act Grant**

(August 18, 2010) The Medina County Port Authority has been awarded a \$1.6 million grant in stimulus funding for construction of the Medina County Fiber Network.

Bethany Dentler, Executive Director of the Medina County Economic Development Corporation, who also serves as the Administrator for the Medina County Port Authority, said that this grant represents a portion of the \$45 million award announced today by Vice President Joe Biden to OneCommunity, the non-profit communications company that will construct the fiber network.

Also this week, the Port Authority approved a bond resolution to finance construction of this fiber optics network, which will consist of approximately 151 miles of dark fiber throughout Medina County, connecting all major metropolitan areas in the County with 144 strands of dark fiber, as well as fiber networks in Cuyahoga and Summit Counties.

Dentler said, "The estimated construction cost of the fiber project is \$10.8 million, with a total project cost of approximately \$14 million. The grant that was facilitated through OneCommunity's efforts will give the fiber project an even better opportunity to succeed right out of the gate."

Commissioner Steve Hambley said he was pleased that the federal government recognized the importance of funding projects like the Medina County Fiber Network. He said, "The grant will allow the fiber network to expand the viability of community broadband and facilitate regional economic development, as well as lessening the burden on local governments."

Jim Gerspacher, Chair of the Port Authority's Fiber Network Committee, said, "Along with the State's approval of additional Recovery Zone Bonds, this stimulus grant is an affirmation of the strength of the fiber project. The Port Authority has taken every possible opportunity to reduce expenses so we can bring a more efficient and cost-effective system to our potential users. It is gratifying to be able to bring our tax dollars back to Ohio."

Dentler said that in working with OneCommunity, the Port's fiber network will become part of a 27-county regional fiber build by OneCommunity, which will add nearly 1,000 miles of new fiber optic cable to their existing broadband network and create nearly 500 new jobs in the region.

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Gerspacher said, "Once construction begins later this fall, the ring is estimated to be complete within 18 months. With OneCommunity's existing regional network, many users will be able to connect immediately as their portion of the ring is constructed."

Dentler said that on August 17, 2010, the Medina County Economic Development Corporation Board of Trustees approved a lease agreement between MCEDC and the Medina County Port Authority as it relates to the issuance and use of the Recovery Zone Facility Bonds for the Medina County Fiber Network project. The approved lease will establish a fiber network private sector user's lease, which is needed to satisfy Internal Revenue Service requirements for bond issuance.

Attorney Ralph A. Berry, Jr., serving as Legal Counsel for MCEDC, said that both the Medina County Port Authority and the Medina County Economic Development Corporation have the same objective, which is to support the sale of the bonds to build the fiber network.

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