



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

To: News Media, Community Leaders, and Concerned Citizens

From: Bamberg County Administration

Date: November 21, 2023

Re: Bamberg County Announces Broadband Expansion Plans at Denmark Technical College

Bamberg, South Carolina (November 2023) – On Tuesday, November 14, 2023, Denmark Technical College, in partnership with Voorhees University, hosted a community meeting to educate students and community members about the digital divide as well as vital information on broadband equity, accessibility, and funding through the Affordable Connectivity Program. The meeting was sponsored by the Student Freedom Initiative. William Metts of Metts Engineering also briefed the audience on how the \$12 million United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) ReConnect Grant will be utilized in Bamberg County.

According to Metts, "With the USDA ReConnect funding, Bamberg County is proposing to construct a Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP) buried project to increase infrastructure throughout portions of Bamberg County where there is no 25/3 Mbps broadband service available. Bamberg County will place approximately 210 miles of buried fiber across the central portions of the county that will pass approximately 2625 potential subscribers. This area includes the communities of Hunter's Chapel, Denmark, and portions of the City of Bamberg. Bamberg County is one of twelve counties in the state of South Carolina designated as a 'Persistent Poverty County,' which means the residents of this community face specific challenges and will rely on broadband internet services to help grow their local economy and increase their opportunities for the future."

Bamberg County Administrator Joey Preston said, "This is the first of a series of community meetings in which Bamberg County leaders will share the good news about broadband expansion. We also encourage residents to apply for the Affordable Connectivity Program; households with students on free or reduced lunch qualify as well as all college students who receive a Pell grant. We are thrilled that affordable and accessible broadband internet is finally coming to Bamberg County!"

####

For more information on this press release, email info@bambergcounty.sc.gov.