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**NDATC announces launch of new brand as BAND: Broadband Association of North Dakota**  
*DRN celebrates new brand*

**(Ellendale, ND)** -- The North Dakota Association of Telecommunication Cooperatives (NDATC), an organization representing members of North Dakota's independent telecommunication industry including DRN, announced today the launch of a new brand and identity. The organization will now be known as BAND: Broadband Association of North Dakota.

DRN, is one of 18-member organizations that are part of BAND. The change in name reflects the commitment of the member organizations to evolve with the communication needs of North Dakotans, with an important shift from telephone to broadband.

"The telecom industry has changed dramatically over the past 10-15 years. And while our communications methods have shifted from telephone to broadband, our Association name had not. So, it was imperative for the Association to change the name to reflect what has been happening within the industry. It is no longer about landline telephones—it's about broadband," said Robert K. Johnson, CEO/GM of DRN.

BAND was formed sixty-five years ago when a group of North Dakota telephone cooperatives met at the Patterson Hotel in Bismarck. Their mission: to guard against unfavorable legislation, and to ensure the highest quality communication systems were available across North Dakota.

This mission has carried the organization through a revolutionary era of communication. At the time of the association's creation, a majority of rural North Dakota residents had party-line service, wires were strung from pole to pole and "long distance" calls were prohibitively expensive. Today, rural areas of the State have access to some of the fastest and most affordable broadband technology found anywhere in the United States.

As communication methods evolved around the world, BAND and its member organizations have evolved with them. In the past decade, DRN has laid over 4,000 miles of fiber across its territory and was one of the first in the state to have its infrastructure 100% fiber as well as one of the first to provide Gig Internet Speeds.

"A lot has changed within our Association and member organizations over the years, from the infrastructure to the various services offered," said Johnson. "But what has not changed is our commitment to working together, staying innovative, and providing unparalleled service."

Today, BAND and its member organizations continue to build on their 65-year-old promise: to evolve with the needs of its subscribers "at the end of the line." Together, they are ensuring North Dakota is the most connected state in the U.S.

"We don't know what services and technologies customers will use in the future," said BAND executive Vice President David Crothers, "but we do know that it will be broadband and Internet-based, and it will require more capacity and more speed in more places. DRN and the other independent broadband providers in North Dakota are committed to meeting that challenge just as we have done for the last 65 years."

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