

July 11, 2008

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Commerce Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John D. Dingell
Chairman
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ted Stevens
Vice Chairman
Senate Commerce Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joe Barton
Ranking Member
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Inouye, Vice Chairman Stevens, Chairman Dingell and Ranking Member Barton:

The undersigned organizations write to express our strong support for Congressional action to promote greater availability and adoption of broadband high-speed Internet services.

The leading bills pending before Congress (S. 1492, the Broadband Data Improvement Act and H.R. 3919, the Broadband Census of America Act of 2007) would improve information-gathering about current broadband deployment and assist in targeting resources to areas in need of such services. A recent FCC order requires more focused broadband data collection from broadband providers but does not address other important broadband mapping elements contained in the pending legislation.

We believe Congress should adopt legislation this year that provides federal government support for state initiatives using public-private partnerships to identify gaps in broadband coverage and to develop both the supply of and demand for broadband in those areas. The ability to accelerate deployment and adoption by bringing together government, broadband providers, business, labor, farm organizations, librarians, educators, and consumer groups in public-private partnerships is greater than the ability of these diverse players standing alone.

Adopting a national policy to stimulate subscription where it is already available, and deployment where it is not, could have dramatic and far-reaching economic impacts. For example, a Connected Nation study released February 2008 estimated the total annual economic impact of accelerating broadband across the nation to be more than \$134 billion. In addition to the \$134 billion total benefit, the study found that increasing broadband adoption by another seven percent could result in:

- **\$92 billion** through an additional 2.4 million jobs per year created or retained;
- **\$662 million** saved per year in reduced healthcare costs;
- **\$6.4 billion** per year in mileage savings from unnecessary driving;

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- **\$18 million** in carbon credits associated with 3.2 billion fewer pounds of CO2 emissions per year in the United States; and
- **\$35.2 billion** in value from 3.8 billion more hours saved per year from accessing broadband at home.

We cannot afford to let another year go by without adopting policies that will stimulate the economy in such ways, while expanding use of the networks that are already deployed and providing broadband in previously underserved areas. That is why we urge you to work in a bipartisan, bicameral way to enact federal legislation this year.

Thank you for your timely consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

AT&T

Alliance for Public Technology

American Association of People with Disabilities

American Library Association

Cablevision

Charter Communications

The Children's Partnership

Comcast

Communications Workers of America

Connected Nation

Cox Communications

EDUCAUSE

Embarq

Independent Telephone & Telecommunications Alliance

Information Technology Industry Council

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Internet Innovation Alliance

NIC, Inc.

National Cable and Telecommunications Association

National Farmers Union

The National Grange

National Rural Health Association

Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications
Companies

Qwest

Time Warner Cable

U.S. Cattlemen's Association

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

United States Telecom Association

Verizon

Western Telecommunications Association

Windstream

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cc: The Honorable Harry Reid
The Honorable Mitch McConnell
The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
The Honorable Jon Kyl
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
The Honorable John A. Boehner
The Honorable Edward J. Markey
The Honorable Cliff Stearns