



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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News Media Contact:
Rosemary Kimball at (202) 418-0511
e-mail: rosemary.kimball@fcc.gov

FCC LAUNCHES "RURAL HEALTH CARE PILOT PROGRAM" WEBSITE *Pilot Funding Program Will Facilitate Creation of Nationwide Broadband Healthcare Network*

Washington, DC -- The FCC has launched a website (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/rural/rhcp.html>) that provides a consolidated source of information about the FCC's recently announced Rural Health Care Pilot Program. The website includes the Order adopting the pilot program and the accompanying news release, a PDF slide presentation giving an overview of the program, and frequently asked questions (FAQs). The website will be updated periodically, as appropriate.

The FCC's pilot program is an innovative, enhanced funding initiative intended to help public and non-profit health care providers construct state- and region-wide broadband networks to provide telehealth and telemedicine services throughout the nation. The program will fund up to 85% of the costs of constructing those networks, as well as the costs of advanced telecommunications and information services that will ride over these networks. If selected, up to 85% of the cost of connecting to Internet2, a dedicated nationwide backbone, may also be funded by the pilot program. Connection to Internet 2 is not required, but may be requested by the applicants.

Applications for the program must be filed no later than 30 days after the Commission receives approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of the information collection requirements contained in the FCC's Order announcing the pilot program. (The Paperwork Reduction Act collection requirements were published in the Federal Register on October 18, 2006.) The FCC will issue a Public Notice announcing OMB approval once that has occurred.

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Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau Contact: Robert Somers at (202) 418-1483.

Wireline Competition Bureau Contact: Erika Olsen at (202) 418-2868.