

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Prepared Remarks on National Broadband Plan
FCC Open Agenda Meeting, Washington, D.C.
February 18, 2010

We've just heard a very impressive and important presentation that focuses our attention on some of the critical reasons why success on broadband is so important to the country.

It's so important because broadband is essential to fostering 21st century jobs, investment and economic growth. It's also so important because of the vital role broadband must play in advancing key societal goals in areas like education, health care, energy, public safety, democracy, and small business opportunity.

In charging the Commission with creating a National Broadband Plan, Congress took the significant step of instructing us to address not only broadband deployment and adoption, but also to look at how broadband can advance a series of "national purposes."

What was behind that directive, I believe, was a vision of the future that motivates us every day.

A future in which kids in poor neighborhoods, living in rural towns or city apartments, can access the best teachers in the world in their classrooms, and access up-to-date e-textbooks and high-quality tutoring in their homes.

A future in which a senior with diabetes can get dietary counseling on her home computer, a remote diagnosis in a nearby facility, or, if necessary, even surgery aided remotely by specialists at teaching hospitals.

A future in which families are saving electricity every day through smart appliances that operate only when they need to, and electric cars that can return power to the grid as well as take from it.

A future in which law enforcement officers and first responders from many jurisdictions can work together as one smart, fluid team on a single, integrated mobile broadband network, and where a paramedic tending to a car accident victim on a rural road can have a live video connection with an ER doctor.

It's in these kinds of applications that we'll see some of the most important benefits of pursuing

universal broadband.

The other day I spoke about a 100 megabit-100 household goal for broadband. Some folks called it “just a dream.” But I think we must set ambitious goals for U.S. broadband.

And we must do so in the areas we heard about today—we must consider goals like these:

- Every classroom in every school in America should be connected to broadband capable of online learning and remote tutoring.
- Every kid in America should have a real opportunity in school to become digitally literate.
- Every job seeker in America should have access to online job postings and online job training through a high speed connection at the local public library or other community anchor institution.
- Every hospital, clinic, and first responder in America should be connected to broadband—and have the ability to send and receive MRIs, CT-Scans and other medical records, with doctors able to engage in remote diagnostics.
- Every home in America should be connected to the smart grid and have access to actionable energy data.
- Every citizen can go online and access government data and services.

These are just some of the goals your work has required us too consider. This is an unparalleled team working on an unparalleled process. America is grateful for the work you have done, and we are excited for the final product.