



NEWS

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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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FCC ANNOUNCES BROADBAND ACTION AGENDA

Washington, D.C. -- Today, the Federal Communications Commission announced an ambitious 2010 agenda for implementing key recommendations of the National Broadband Plan that involve rulemakings and other notice-and-comment proceedings. The Plan, which the FCC delivered to Congress on March 16, 2010, lays out a comprehensive strategy for connecting all corners of the nation while transforming the economy and society with the communications network of the future -- robust, affordable, and high-speed Internet. The Plan aims to tackle serious challenges of global competitiveness by pursuing a world-leading broadband infrastructure for the United States, which will be an enduring engine for job creation and economic growth.

“We are putting the National Broadband Plan into action,” said FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski. “The Commission’s Bureaus and Offices have already begun executing on the strategy the National Broadband Plan lays out to connect all Americans to broadband, unleash innovation and investment, enable job creation, and ensure a bright future of economic opportunity and prosperity.”

Chairman Genachowski added, “The court decision earlier this week does not change our broadband policy goals, or the ultimate authority of the FCC to act to achieve those goals. The court did not question the FCC’s goals; it merely invalidated one technical, legal mechanism for broadband policy chosen by prior Commissions. Our implementation plan lays out a roadmap for reforming universal service to connect all Americans to broadband, including in rural areas; unleashing spectrum, promoting competition and supporting small businesses; protecting and empowering consumers; safeguarding on-line privacy; increasing adoption in all communities and ensuring fair access for people with disabilities; protecting broadband networks against cyber attack and other disasters; and ensuring that all users can reach 911 in an emergency. It is essential that the Commission act on this roadmap to protect America’s global competitiveness and help deliver the extraordinary benefits of broadband to all Americans.”

The 2010 Broadband Action Agenda announced today explains the purpose and timing of more than 60 rulemakings and other notice-and-comment proceedings the Plan recommends for FCC action. Executing these steps will accelerate deployment and adoption of robust, affordable broadband for all Americans, helping 100 million U.S. homes get affordable access to actual download speeds of at least 100 megabits over the next decade; promote innovation, investment, competition, and consumer interests throughout the broadband ecosystem; and advance the use of broadband for key national priorities, including public safety, health care, and education.

Building on the unprecedented transparency and inclusiveness of the National Broadband Plan process, the FCC will implement Plan recommendations requiring rulemakings through a series of open, participatory notice-and-comment proceedings. The FCC will simultaneously work to implement the many Plan recommendations that do not require formal agency proceedings, such as providing consumer applications to measure broadband speed, while other government bodies and stakeholders consider Plan recommendations that fall outside the agency's areas of responsibility. FCC actions taken to implement the Plan can be tracked at <http://www.broadband.gov/plan/broadband-action-agenda.html>.

The 2010 Broadband Action Agenda focuses on four key goals:

Promote World-Leading Mobile Broadband Infrastructure and Innovation

- Seek to make an additional 500 megahertz (MHz) of spectrum available for mobile broadband within the next ten years.
- Increase opportunities for unlicensed devices and innovative spectrum access models.
- Expand incentives and mechanisms to reallocate or repurpose spectrum to higher-valued uses.
- Improve the transparency of spectrum allocation and utilization.

Accelerate Universal Broadband Access and Adoption, and Advance National Purposes Such as Education and Health Care

- Carry out a once-in-a-generation transformation of the Universal Service Fund over the next ten years to support broadband service. This will be achieved by converting existing subsidy mechanisms over time from "POTS" (plain old telephone service) to broadband, without increasing the size of the fund over the current baseline projection.
- Upgrade the E-rate program, which has successfully connected public libraries and K-12 classrooms, to benefit students and others across the country by making broadband more accessible.
- Reform and upgrade the Rural Health Care Program to connect more public health facilities to high-speed Internet facilities and to foster telemedicine applications and services. Create a Health Care Infrastructure Fund to support deployment of dedicated health care networks to underserved areas.
- Create a Connect America Fund to extend broadband service to unserved areas of the nation and to ensure affordable broadband service in high-cost areas where support is necessary.
- Create a Mobility Fund to bring all states to a baseline level of "3G" (or better) wireless coverage.

Foster Competition and Maximize Consumer Benefits Across the Broadband Ecosystem

- Enhance broadband and marketplace choices for small businesses and mobile providers by establishing consistent policy frameworks for special access and wholesale wireline competition.
- Improve consumer disclosures and FCC data collection to better monitor and promote broadband competition.
- Fulfill mandate from Congress to ensure that video navigation devices, such as smart video devices, are available to consumers in the marketplace, spurring innovation in home video devices and driving increased broadband adoption and utilization.

Advance Robust and Secure Public Safety Communications Networks

- Facilitate the creation of a nationwide interoperable public safety wireless broadband network.
- Promote cybersecurity and protect critical communications infrastructure.
- Aid the transition to next-generation 911 and alerting systems.

For specific details, please see the 2010 Broadband Action Agenda at <http://www.broadband.gov/plan/broadband-action-agenda.html> and an implementation schedule at <http://www.broadband.gov/plan/chart-of-key-broadband-action-agenda-items.pdf>.

The Broadband Action Agenda does not include key ongoing and upcoming FCC initiatives that lie beyond the scope of the Plan's recommendations, or that are taken pursuant to the Plan but do not involve rulemaking or other notice-and-comment proceedings.

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More information about the National Broadband Plan can be found at www.broadband.gov.