

The FCC's Broadband Acceleration Initiative ***Reducing Regulatory Barriers to Spur Broadband Buildout***

Reducing regulatory barriers – such as barriers to accessing utility poles, rights-of-way, and sites for wireless towers – is a cornerstone of the FCC's strategy for bringing broadband to all Americans. Overcoming these roadblocks can accelerate infrastructure investment that will expand the reach and robustness of broadband networks for all.

At today's Broadband Acceleration Conference, the FCC will launch its Broadband Acceleration Initiative to work with key stakeholders, including state and local governments, to expand the reach and reduce the cost of broadband deployment. We can't let unnecessary barriers to broadband deployment keep us from leading the global economy.

The Broadband Acceleration Initiative sets an aggressive agenda for work inside the FCC, with its partners in state and local governments, and in the private sector to reduce barriers to broadband deployment.

- Today's Broadband Acceleration Conference brings together officials from federal, state and local governments, broadband providers, telecommunications carriers, tower companies, equipment suppliers, and utility companies to identify opportunities to remove regulatory and other barriers to broadband buildout.
- An internal FCC Broadband Acceleration Task Force will develop specific goals and timelines for reducing barriers to broadband buildout by at least 20 percent.
- A working group of the Technical Advisory Council formed by the FCC last year, comprised of industry and technology leaders, will report in March on specific steps the FCC can take to spur buildout.
- In April, the FCC will vote on a Notice of Inquiry to collect critical information about rights-of-way practices that may be impeding broadband investment.
- In April, the FCC will vote on an Order that streamlines access to pole attachments and reduces the cost while protecting the vital electric power grid.

Three Pronged Broadband Strategy

We've implemented a three-pronged broadband strategy:

1. **Unleashing spectrum** - the invisible infrastructure that sustains our wireless communications. Historically, we've seen that freeing spectrum for broadband has spurred massive mobile innovation and investment. That's why we're pursuing an aggressive mobile agenda, including voluntary incentive auctions.
2. **Transforming the Universal Service Fund** - to help private companies to build out networks to communities where there was no economic case for service. Earlier this week, we launched an effort to modernize USF to make sure we get the most bang for our USF buck.
3. **Accelerating broadband** - removing barriers to broadband build-out and speeding up processes to lower the cost of deployment.

Existing Efforts to Create Jobs by Speeding Broadband Deployment

- *Universal Service*: Proposed reforms would streamline existing programs to incentivize broadband buildout in unserved rural areas. Studies show that a \$5 billion investment from the USF in broadband could create 75,000 indirect jobs related to broadband in health care, smart grid, and education, along with growth of small business in areas no longer isolated because of broadband.
- *Wireless Towers*: The FCC is working to free more airwaves for advanced mobile broadband, an engine for jobs and the economy. We can't get to next generation broadband (4G) without new towers or new antennas. We can't let unnecessary roadblocks get in the way of deploying the necessary infrastructure.
 - Investment in the estimated 40,000 towers needed to expand mobile broadband to cover almost all Americans could create 53,000 jobs.
- *Tower Siting*: The FCC in 2009 established a "shot clock" to speed permitting of towers to support wireless service. Too often, cell towers aren't built or are significantly delayed because of permitting and other issues; this action puts a 90-day time limit on permitting decisions.
- *Dig Once*: The FCC's National Broadband Plan recommendation to coordinate fiber builds with infrastructure projects – so that people only have to "dig once" – has been championed in Congress.

Reforming the FCC

- The Broadband Acceleration Initiative builds on efforts of our Special Counsel for FCC reform to improve agency operations, review our regulations, and determine which are no longer useful and eliminate them.