

Before the  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of )  
 )  
Joint Statement on Broadband ) GN Docket No. 10-66

JOINT STATEMENT ON BROADBAND

Adopted: March 16, 2010

Released: March 16, 2010

By the Commission:

1. High-speed broadband is beginning to reshape every sector of our economy and many aspects of American life. Broadband service can be an indispensable engine for unleashing innovation and investment, spurring job creation and economic growth, and ensuring our country’s global competitiveness. Working to make sure that America has world-leading high-speed broadband networks—both wired and wireless—lies at the very core of the FCC’s mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

2. Recognizing the fundamental importance of broadband, section 6001(k) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act instructs the Commission to submit to Congress a National Broadband Plan.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, section 6001(k)(2) requires the Plan to: analyze mechanisms for ensuring broadband access by all people of the United States; provide a detailed strategy for achieving affordability and maximum usage; and include a plan for use of broadband to advance national purposes such as education, health care, energy, and public safety.

3. *Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan* is delivered in response to this statutory requirement. The Plan provides recommendations on a variety of issues, which the Commission will actively consider through proceedings that provide notice and ample opportunity for comment, allowing the agency to generate robust records. Although each of us may have differing opinions on some of the specific recommendations set forth in the Plan, we all share the following common beliefs:

- Every American should have a meaningful opportunity to benefit from the broadband communications era—regardless of geography, race, economic status, disability, residence on tribal land, or degree of digital literacy.
- Continuous private sector investment in wired and wireless networks and technologies, and competition among providers, are critical to ensure vitality and innovation in the broadband ecosystem and to encourage new products and services that benefit American consumers and businesses of every size.

<sup>1</sup> American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Pub. L. No. 111-5, § 6001(k), 123 Stat. 115, 515-16 (2009) (ARRA).

- Strategic and prudent policies toward public resources like spectrum will benefit all Americans, by meeting current and future needs and by promoting continued innovation, investment, and competition.
- The nearly \$9 billion Universal Service Fund (USF) and the intercarrier compensation (ICC) system should be comprehensively reformed to increase accountability and efficiency, encourage targeted investment in broadband infrastructure, and emphasize the importance of broadband to the future of these programs.<sup>2</sup>
- Our Nation should harness the tools of modern communications technology to protect all Americans, including by enabling the development of a nation-wide, wireless, interoperable broadband network for the Nation's first responders.
- Ubiquitous and affordable broadband can unlock vast new opportunities for Americans, in communities large and small, with respect to consumer welfare, civic participation, public safety and homeland security, community development, health care delivery, energy independence and efficiency, education, worker training, private sector investment, entrepreneurial activity, job creation and economic growth, and other national purposes.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary

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<sup>2</sup> Section 6001(k)(2) of the ARRA states that: "The national broadband plan required by this section shall seek to ensure that all people of the United States have access to broadband capability."