



News for Immediate Release

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Pennsylvania to Host 2010 Broadband Summit

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Harrisburg – To move closer to its goal of making broadband available to every citizen, the commonwealth will host the 2010 Pennsylvania Broadband Summit on Sept. 20 and 21 in the Harrisburg area.

This free event will bring together local, state and federal government officials; telecommunications industry leaders; law enforcement and public safety professionals; educators and librarians; healthcare experts and others to discuss broadband access and adoption, the state and national broadband plans, and practical applications of broadband technology in a variety of fields.

“High-speed Internet is an economic, educational and social necessity,” said Secretary of Administration Naomi Wyatt. “Communities and businesses that have this access are positioned to compete in the global marketplace. Those that don’t risk being on the wrong side of the ‘digital divide.’”

Pennsylvania has one of the most aggressive and innovative broadband deployment programs in the nation. Pursuant to Act 183 of 2004, every Pennsylvania community will have broadband access through its local telephone company by 2015.

“Because of Pennsylvania’s early efforts to expand broadband, we are uniquely positioned to really take advantage of opportunities available through the National Broadband Plan and the Recovery Act,” said Wyatt.

The National Broadband Plan echoes Pennsylvania’s commitment to widespread, affordable access to broadband services. The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 includes \$7.2 billion to expand broadband services and infrastructure, especially in unserved and underserved areas.

Pennsylvania organizations were awarded four grants totaling \$138.2 million in the first round of broadband funding. For the second round, the commonwealth has recommended 11 proposals totaling \$108 million.

Of the \$138.2 million, the commonwealth received \$28.8 million for a middle mile infrastructure project in 32 counties north of Interstate 80. The grant will be used to add broadband capacity to Pennsylvania’s statewide public safety radio network,

known as PA-STARNet. Local telecommunications companies and Internet service providers will be able to purchase excess capacity at competitive prices to serve citizens, schools, businesses and other organizations.

The commonwealth will also leverage PA-STARNet's existing infrastructure by allowing broadband providers to lease space on its towers, helping to reduce the cost of providing access to less-populated regions. Revenue generated by the lease agreements will be used to defray the costs to taxpayers of maintaining the radio network.

The 2010 Pennsylvania Broadband Summit will be held at the Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center in Camp Hill, Cumberland County. For more information or to register, visit www.programs.psu.edu/broadband2010.

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Editor's Note: To learn more about broadband opportunities through the Recovery Act, visit www.recovery.pa.gov and click on "Opportunities;" to learn more about the state Broadband Plan, visit <http://www.newpa.com/download.aspx?id=1424>; and for information on the National Broadband Plan, visit <http://www.broadband.gov/>.

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