

The Case For Universal Broadband in America: Now!

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Costs of Failure to Achieve President's Goal of Universal Broadband by 2007 are "Staggering," Says New Report

Include Hundreds of Billions of Dollars of Economic Growth and Over a Million Jobs

WASHINGTON, October 10, 2007: The failure to achieve President Bush's 2004 goal of universal broadband access to the Internet "in every corner of America by the year 2007" has cost our nation hundreds of billions of dollars in added economic development and over a million newly-created high-paying jobs, according to a report by the nonprofit Center for Creative Voices in Media released today at the Brookings Institution.

The Case for Universal Broadband in America: Now! finds that wide swaths of America have no broadband at all, or only "fraudband" that is so slow, unreliable, expensive and/or consumer-unfriendly that it cannot bring Americans the benefits of universal broadband that President Bush cited back in 2004, including:

- **Hundreds of Billions of Dollars in New Economic Development**
- **Increased Homeland Security and Public Safety**
- **Better Health Care at Lower Cost**
- **Enhanced Educational Opportunities**
- **Greater Citizen Participation in Government and Communities**
- **More Access to – and Participation in – Journalism, Culture and Entertainment.**

"Despite the President's 2004 call for 'Full Speed Ahead' deployment of universal broadband in America by 2007, Washington has moved at 'No Speed Nowhere,'" said Jonathan Rintels, Executive Director of the Center for Creative Voices in Media. "Since 2004, America has actually fallen in the global rankings in per capita use of broadband technology from 10th to 15th. The economic, social and cultural costs of this failure to deploy broadband to all Americans are staggering."

The report details the overwhelming evidence that fast, affordable and reliable broadband access to the Internet often makes the difference between success and failure, including:

- **Success.** Bob Hale, a farmer in rural northeast Oregon, has used his access to high-speed broadband to become the largest red onion supplier to the Subway sandwich chain.
- **Failure.** The Longaberger Company, one of the largest privately held companies in America, built its business selling baskets and crafts produced in its home state of Ohio, where it is a major employer and civic booster. But it was forced to locate its new data center in another state because fast, reliable, and affordable broadband did not exist in the northeast Ohio area where the company is headquartered.
- **Success.** A regional effort to bring fast, reliable, affordable broadband to rural southwest Virginia

has spurred the creation of so many high paying “knowledge-worker” jobs that to avoid a labor shortage, the state has established a “Return to Roots” program to lure back area natives who left before broadband arrived.

- **Success.** In Japan, fast broadband enables pathologists to use high-definition video and remote-controlled microscopes to examine tissue samples from patients living in areas without access to major hospitals.
- **Failure.** Japan has broadband that is eight to thirty times faster than the average speed in America. Here in the U.S., many innovative and cost-saving Internet-based applications are not available because broadband in so many sections of the country is too slow, costly and/or unreliable.
- **Success – If We Act Now!** Researchers project that deployment of fast, reliable and affordable broadband across America could generate \$500 billion a year in added economic development, and expand U.S. employment by an estimated 1.2 million new and permanent jobs.

The bottom line is that in 2007, America is not even close to deploying fast, reliable and affordable broadband to all its citizens. Our federal government must undertake a concerted national effort to deploy universal, net-neutral broadband comparable to that which deployed telephone and electric service and built a vast network of superhighways. The economic, social and cultural benefits to all Americans of this investment will vastly outweigh its costs. Our nation will stop falling farther behind our international competitors, secure our leadership in global technology, enhance our homeland security and public safety, and provide all of our citizens with the opportunity to participate in the new, global, networked 21st Century world.

In 2006, leading CEOs and policy innovators launched the Horizon Project to address critical economic and trade policy issues in America. “From our work on Horizon, my colleagues and I are very aware of how America’s deficiency in broadband deployment is costing our economy hundreds of billions of dollars in economic growth and over a million high-quality jobs,” said Leo Hindery, Jr., chair of Horizon. “The Center for Creative Voices in Media has now done a marvelous job of making the case that universal, net-neutral broadband must become an immediate national priority.”

The Center for Creative Voices in Media is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to preserving in America’s media the original, independent, and diverse creative voices that enrich our nation’s culture and safeguard its democracy. Creative Voices’ Board of Advisors includes numerous winners of Oscars, Emmys, Tonys, and other awards for creative excellence, along with respected media scholars. The full report is linked below.

Links -

Horizon Project - <http://www.horizonproject.us/>

This Report - http://www.creativevoices.us/cgi-upload/news/news_article/BroadbandNowReportFinal.pdf