



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

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. Cir. 1974).

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NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Mark Wigfield
(202) 418-0253
Email: mark.wigfield@fcc.gov

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE BROADBAND ADOPTION & USE GAIN SUPPORT

Leaders, Citizens Gather at Knight/FCC Forum to Discuss Recommendations in FCC's National Broadband Plan

Washington – A diverse group of citizens and leaders gathered Tuesday in support of strategies that will provide 93 million Americans who have been left behind in the digital age with the tools they need to seek jobs, stay informed and connected, and pursue economic opportunity.

America's Digital Inclusion Summit at the Newseum focused on the need to break down barriers to broadband as high-speed Internet service becomes increasingly vital to citizens and the nation. The U.S. can meet an ambitious goal – home broadband use by 90% of Americans by 2020, compared to 65% today – by starting with recommendations contained in the [National Broadband Plan](#) being developed for Congress by the Federal Communications Commission, FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski said.

“In order to ensure long term American competitiveness and prosperity, we must not leave one-third of the nation behind,” Genachowski said. “The National Broadband Plan provides a vision for federal, state and local leadership and partnerships with the private and non-profit communities that will bridge the digital divide and transform America into a nation where broadband expands opportunities for all.”

The Summit was co-hosted by the FCC and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Knight President and CEO Alberto Ibargüen said, “Broadband access for all is essential to meeting the information needs of communities in a democracy. Without it, we’ll end up with a new category of second-class citizens. With it, everyone will be able to harness the social and economic opportunities of the digital age.”

Others participating in the Summit included U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan; FCC Commissioners Michael Copps, Meredith Attwell Baker, and Mignon Clyburn; Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.); Rep. Lee Terry (R-Neb.); Xavier Becerra (D-Cal.); Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA); Ted Olson, co-chair of the Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities; Rhonda Locklear, a housing specialist with the Lumbee Tribe in Pembroke, N.C.; Garrison Phillips, a writer and Korean War veteran from New York; Alex Kurt, an Americorps Volunteer in St. Paul; Irvin Aviles, a technician with Time Warner

Cable in Baltimore; Florence Pearson, Educator, New York N.Y; and Joey Durel, City-Parish President of Lafayette, La.

In addition to hundreds in attendance at the Newseum, many participated via webcast from fcc.gov/live. In Akron, Detroit, Miami, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Philadelphia, people gathered to watch the national webcast and convene local discussions about accelerating broadband adoption in their city or state.

Tuesday's summit focused on ways to help people take advantage of broadband when it is available to them, known as broadband adoption. A [comprehensive survey](#) by the FCC on broadband adoption found that key barriers include the cost of computers or connections, lack of online skills, and lack of understanding about the relevance of broadband applications, with issues for people with disabilities cutting across and beyond those barriers.

The FCC will deliver its [National Broadband Plan](#) to Congress on March 17, which will detail strategies for expanding affordable, world-class broadband throughout the country. This will be a strategy for U.S. global leadership in high-speed Internet to create jobs and spur economic growth; to unleash new waves of innovation and investment; and to improve education, health care, energy efficiency, public safety, and the vibrancy of our democracy.

The draft broadband plan makes a number of recommendations on increasing broadband adoption to FCC, Congress and other branches of government and the private and non-profit sectors. They include:

- Improve digital literacy for all Americans:
 - Public funding for a Digital Literacy Corps to conduct skills training and outreach in communities with low rates of adoption, while building workforce skills for Corps members
 - Increase the capacity and knowledge in libraries and community centers to provide digital literacy training
 - Creation of an Online Skills Portal, containing free, age-appropriate lessons from the technology and education sectors that users can access and use at their own pace
- Show how broadband is relevant:
 - Public funding for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to support public-private partnerships
 - Private and non-profit partnerships in national outreach and awareness campaigns
 - Targeted support for seniors
- Make broadband more affordable:
 - Expand to include broadband in two FCC programs that currently help make voice telephone service more affordable, known as Lifeline and Link-Up
 - Consider use of spectrum for a free or very low cost wireless broadband service
- Improve focus on measurement, best practices and state and local initiatives:
 - Use remaining Broadband Data Improvement Act (BDIA) funds to enhance state and local broadband initiatives and planning

- Augment this with increased focus on evaluation and assessment of all adoption programs
- Creation of a Best Practices Clearinghouse for practitioners to share lessons on how to improve broadband access, adoption and utilization

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More about the Federal Communications Commission's development of the National Broadband Plan can be found at www.broadband.gov

About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation advances journalism in the digital age and invests in the vitality of communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Knight Foundation focuses on projects that promote informed, engaged communities and lead to transformational change. For more information, visit www.knightfoundation.org.