

Press Release: NTIA Awards Grants for Broadband Mapping and Planning in Arkansas, the District of Columbia, and New York

Recovery Act Funding to Lay Groundwork for Enhanced Internet Services

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WASHINGTON –The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today announced that it has awarded grants to fund broadband mapping and planning activities in Arkansas, the District of Columbia, and New York under NTIA's State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program. The program, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, will increase broadband access and adoption through better data collection and broadband planning. The data will be displayed in NTIA's national broadband map, a tool that will inform policymakers' efforts and provide consumers with improved information on the broadband Internet services available to them.

"This program will advance efforts to expand broadband access and adoption nationwide, which is vital to job creation and economic recovery," said Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling. "NTIA will continue to provide guidance to applicants where necessary to help them improve their proposed projects, so that all states and territories can soon participate in this initiative."

NTIA received applications representing all 50 states, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia to participate in the program, meaning that all governments that were eligible to apply for grants did so, whether directly or through a designated entity. The first five grants under this program were announced earlier this month and the agency expects to continue announcing awards on a rolling basis throughout the fall.

With today's announcement, NTIA has awarded Connect Arkansas approximately \$1.6 million for broadband data collection and mapping activities over a two-year period and almost \$500,000 for broadband planning activities over a five-year period for the state of Arkansas, bringing the total grant award to nearly \$2.1 million. Connect Arkansas, the designated entity for the state of Arkansas, is a private nonprofit organization based in that state.

NTIA has awarded the District of Columbia Office of the Chief Technology Officer (DC OCTO) approximately \$993,000 for broadband data collection and mapping activities over a two-year period and \$500,000 for broadband planning activities over a five-year period for the District of Columbia, bringing the total grant award to nearly \$1.5 million. DC OCTO is the designated entity for the District of Columbia.

In addition, NTIA has awarded the New York State Office of Cyber Security & Critical Infrastructure (OCSCI) approximately \$2 million for broadband data collection and

mapping activities over a two-year period and \$500,000 for broadband planning activities over a five-year period for New York, bringing the total grant award to approximately \$2.5 million. OCSCI is the designated entity for the state of New York.

Awardees will collect and verify the availability, speed, and location of broadband across the state. This activity is to be conducted on a semi-annual basis between 2009 and 2011, with the data to be presented in a clear and accessible format to the public, government, and the research community.

The State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program is a matching grant program that implements the joint purposes of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Broadband Data Improvement Act (BDIA). The program will provide grants to assist states or their designees in gathering and verifying state-specific data on the availability, speed, location, and technology type of broadband services. The data they collect and compile will also be used to develop publicly available state-wide broadband maps and to inform the comprehensive, interactive, and searchable national broadband map that NTIA is required by the Recovery Act to create and make publicly available by February 17, 2011.

The national broadband map will publicly display the geographic areas where broadband service is available; the technology used to provide the service; the speeds of the service; and broadband service availability at public schools, libraries, hospitals, colleges, universities, and public buildings. The national map will also be searchable by address and show the broadband providers offering service in the corresponding census block or street segment.

Awardees are required to contribute at least 20 percent non-federal matching funds toward project costs. In addition, while the BDIA mandates that each state may designate only one eligible entity to receive funds under the program, each state's applicant will be carefully evaluated and must meet the standards described in NTIA's Notice of Funds Availability for this program in order to receive funding.

U.S. Department of Commerce's NTIA serves as the executive branch agency principally responsible for advising the President on communications and information policy. For more information about the NTIA, visit www.ntia.doc.gov.

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