

# BROADBANDCENSUS.COM'S weekly report

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6/8/2009

A White House official involved in technology policy last week called U.S. broadband networks inadequate. This week, attention is likely to turn to the Federal Communications Commission, as entities and individuals weigh in on the National Broadband Plan by the June 8 deadline.

## WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL KICKS OFF BROADBAND STIMULUS TOWN HALL

The government needs to play a role in helping bridge the high-speed internet divide, Jim Kohlenberger, Chief of Staff in the White House's Office of Science and Technology said Thursday.

For more, see <http://broadbandcensus.com/2009/06/white-house-official-kicks-off-broadband-stimulus-town-hall-webcast-decries-us-networks-as-inadequate/>

## THE WEEK'S LINKS

### Mapping Stirring Conflict Over Stimulus Funding

The broadband mapping organization **Connected Nation** is taking heat for its backing by telecommunications companies like **Comcast Corp.**, **Verizon Communications**, and **AT&T**. According to an article in *The Wall Street Journal*, Connected Nation has neglected smaller providers, and critics say that calls into question their role when the government begin issuing the \$7.2 billion in broadband stimulus funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124398778433479409.html> While details of the approximately \$350 million of the total allocated for federal broadband data and mapping are still being debated, **Jim Stegeman** of broadband mapping firm **CostQuest Associates** fleshed out some cost comparisons between DSL and fiber networks in the company's update of its map of Wyoming. <http://gigaom.com/2009/06/03/i-say-broadband-maps-you-say-boondoggle/> But **App-rising** asks whether a more incremental approach to broadband data—with granular surveys based on speed [http://www.app-rising.com/2009/06/an\\_incremental\\_approach\\_to\\_bro.html](http://www.app-rising.com/2009/06/an_incremental_approach_to_bro.html), such as the newly unveiled Virginia broadband map apparently created at no cost to the citizens of the state—might be more appropriate. <http://www.delmarvanow.com/article/20090603/ESN01/906030370> **USA Today** captures the importance of Internet growth in the last decade and the surge of high-speed broadband over dial up. [http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2009-06-03-internet-use-broadband\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2009-06-03-internet-use-broadband_N.htm)

### The Obama Administration and Broadband Expansion

**Google's** top global public policy executive, **Andrew McLaughlin**, joins the Obama administration as deputy chief technology officer. <http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/05/29/googles-top-policy-exec-to-join-obama-administration/> McLaughlin is one of three top Google technology officers who have left to work for the new administration, along with **Katie Stanton** and **Sonal Shah**. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/03/AR2009060303689.html?wpisrc=newsletter&wpisrc=newsletter> This happens at the same time that the Federal Trade Commission is working to decide if antitrust laws are being broken between the governing boards of Google, **Apple**, and other Silicon Valley tech firms. Top executives from the tech sector – **Microsoft**, **Adobe**, **Sybase** – land in the Capital this week to discuss taxes, immigration, and piracy (the software kind) <http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2009/06/04/tech-industry-execs-hit-washington-dc/>, as Sens. **Ron Wyden**, D-Ore., and **Olympia Snowe**, R-Maine push for the Mobile Wireless Tax Fairness Act with a five-year abatement on tax increases for wireless telecommunications companies. <http://techdailydose.nationaljournal.com/2009/06/wyden-to-push-wireless-tax-mor.php> The **American Cable Association** puts in a request to the Federal Communications Commission for limited taxes on small businesses expanding broadband to unserved or underserved areas. <http://www.americancable.org/> Republican FCC Commissioner **Robert McDowell** has been renominated for an additional term, joining the list of those awaiting confirmation. Obama's pick to chair the FCC, former **Harvard Law School** classmate **Julius Genachowski** remains under consideration by the Senate. <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssTechMediaTelecomNews/idUSN0252298520090602> and <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2009/05/29/gop-nominees-for-fcc-appear-set/> and [http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/277643-Sources\\_Republicans\\_Closer\\_To\\_FCC\\_Picks.php?rssid=20065](http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/277643-Sources_Republicans_Closer_To_FCC_Picks.php?rssid=20065)

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## NEW INFRASTRUCTURE A CHALLENGE

Balancing privacy and security will require a delicate approach said a panel of experts at the Computers Freedom & Privacy conference at George Washington University.

For more, see <http://broadbandcensus.com/2009/06/securing-new-infrastructure-will-need-watchful-eye-experts-say/>

## UPDATES TO NTIA COMMENTS

The BroadbandCensus.com List of NTIA Comments has been updated to include summaries of comments from the following organizations:

- AT&T
- Atkins Telephone
- ATSI
- Barling Bay
- Benton Foundation
- Big Think Strategies
- Boston
- Bresnan Communications
- Broadband Development Corporation
- Broadband Diversity Supporters
- Broadpoint
- Center for Democracy and Technology
- Cheetah Wireless
- Chicago
- Cisco
- Community Connect Network
- Connected Nation
- US Cellular
- US Telecom Association
- Utopian Wireless

For more, see <http://broadbandcensus.com/2009/06/new-updates-to-the-broadbandcensuscom-list-of-ntia-comments/>

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## REPORT: STIMULUS TOWNHALL

**WASHINGTON, June 8, 2009** - The **NTIA** faces a choice between scoring broadband grants according to a common criteria, or meeting the manifold objectives of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, panelists said at the Broadband Stimulus National Town Hall Meeting on June 4.

Speaking at an event co-hosted by BroadbandCensus.com and **TV Worldwide**, **Joanne Hovis** of **Columbia Telecommunications Corporation** said that the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Agency and the Agriculture Department's **Rural Utilities Service** must be cognizant of multiple objectives as they design their scoring system.

**Scott Wallsten** of the **Technology Policy Institute** said that it was as important to track projects that are not funded by the broadband stimulus effort as it is track those that receive funding. That way, researchers and policy-makers can have the most complete picture of the impact that stimulus spending has had on the broadband landscape.

Also weighing into the debate were **Lisa Scalpone**, vice president of government affairs for satellite broadband provider **Wild Blue**, and **Rich Wonders**, vice president of strategic marketing for equipment provider **Alcatel-Lucent**. Additional panels at the event covered the role of the anticipated 20 percent match of private financing, and the role of public-private partnerships in garnering stimulus funds.

"In listening to our panelists, I was struck by the diversity of projects, in terms of size, focus, and geographic reach," added **Marty Stern**, a partner at **K&L Gates** and a sponsor of the webcast.

"We heard about projects that will bring broadband to the Navajo people in New Mexico using innovative wireless solutions, satellite broadband that will serve some of the most rural areas in the country, and a service platform that will bring an array of healthcare, video, and informational service to the elderly and disabled using the power of broadband."

Stern and this reporter co-hosted the webcast, an archive copy of which is accessible for free by registration. [http://www.nlctv.org/events/broadbandstimulus\\_thm/090604/](http://www.nlctv.org/events/broadbandstimulus_thm/090604/)

**Jim Kohlenberger**, chief of staff at the Office of Science and Technology Policy at the White House, kicked off the event with a speech about how the United States needs to improve its broadband deployment and adoption.

The event will be followed by a July 9 workshop by BroadbandCensus.com and TV Worldwide. The follow-on event will lay out the details of NTIA's and RUS's "Notice of Funds Availability," which are expected to be released by June 30.

Also last week, the **Computers, Freedom and Privacy** conference featured an array of panels on the intersection of surveillance, cybersecurity and broadband connections. **Microsoft** and **Google** defended their privacy practices, <http://broadbandcensus.com/2009/06/google-and-microsoft-defend-practices-at-computers-freedom-and-privacy-conference/>, **Susan Crawford** of the White House's National Economy Council emphasized the importance of broadband to President Obama, <http://broadbandcensus.com/2009/06/tech-policy-broadband-still-at-top-of-obamas-list-says-crawford/>, and various experts traded reflections on the future role of "deep packet inspection" and its use by broadband providers. <http://broadbandcensus.com/2009/06/deep-packet-inspection-here-to-stay-say-computers-freedom-and-privacy-conference-experts/>

**-Drew Clark, Editor, BroadbandCensus.com**

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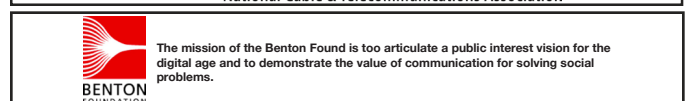
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### MAY: SPENDING THE STIMULUS: TECHNOLOGIES THAT ENABLE UNIVERSAL BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

BROADBANDCENSUS.COM PRESENTS THE BROADBAND BREAKFAST CLUB  
AT CLYDE'S OF GALLERY PLACE, 707 7TH STREET, NW  
TUESDAY, JUNE 9,\* 2009, AT 8 A.M. (\*NOTE DATE CORRECTION)

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- ALYSSA CLEMEN, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COORDINATOR, INTERNATIONAL BROADBAND ELECTRIC COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
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\* NOTE ADDITION OR CHANGE.



## FIRST PITCH

WASHINGTON, June 8, 2009 – Late Friday afternoon, the Federal Communications Commission announced that **Blair Levin**, former chief of staff to Clinton FCC Chairman **Reed Hundt**, will be rejoining the commission “to help coordinate its development of a national broadband plan.”

This is a significant development for a number of reasons. Levin, the respected managing director of the investment advisory firm **Stifel Nicolaus**, was widely seen as a potential FCC chairman himself. He served on President Obama’s transition team. When the nod instead went to Obama’s Harvard Law School classmate **Julius Genachowski**, the conventional wisdom had it that no other job at the commission could attract Levin’s interest.

As in a previous era – when Hundt was FCC chairman during the first term of the Clinton administration – Levin’s willingness to serve again at the FCC appears to herald an era of close and collegial cooperation among the executive branch agencies responsible for communications policy, and with the FCC. Genachowski served on the same team that Levin headed up at that time.

The announcement of Levin’s position also signals the seriousness of purpose that the FCC, itself, is bringing to a national broadband policy. That makes it far more likely that the attention on broadband isn’t likely to fade after the last federal stimulus funds are awarded in September 2010.

Indeed, in January it was Levin himself that said, “In thinking of broadband in the economic stimulus package, don’t confuse a piece of puzzle with the puzzle. Don’t look at an inning of the baseball game as the baseball game. The Obama broadband agenda is not being done solely in the economic recovery package.” Now that he is running the broadband policy, that statement has a much greater likelihood of being a true projection of the Obama administration reality.

Levin’s work begins on June 8, the same day that the first round of comments on the pending broadband policy are due at the FCC. On April 8, the agency released its “Notice of Inquiry” in which it set out this task for itself: the build-out and utilization of high-speed broadband infrastructure.

THE BROADBAND STIMULUS IS ONLY THE FIRST INNING IN THE FIRST GAME OF A CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES.

The agency has set the bar very, very high. It continues: “‘Infrastructure’ barely hints at the importance of what we are undertaking. High-speed ubiquitous broadband can help to restore America’s economic well-being and open the doors of opportunity for more Americans, no matter who they are, where they live, or the particular circumstances of their lives. It is technology that intersects with just about every great challenge facing our nation.”

The 59-page document begins with a data-centric approach to broadband policy. The first steps are to define broadband capability, to define broadband access, and to measure progress toward achievement of a broadband policy. The document identifies this as a way to ensure access. Think of this as the “supply side” of broadband policy, and it includes market mechanisms, universal service subsidization, wireless policies, competition policies, and network neutrality issues.

The document then tackles “affordability and maximum utilization,” including insuring low prices, maximum utilization, and managing privacy and other social concerns. This, then is the “demand side” of broadband policy.

After a nod toward the importance of broadband data, and broadband mapping, in benchmarking progress toward the achievement of supply and demand goals (including, naturally, evaluation of the role of the \$7.2 billion federal broadband stimulus program), the document speaks about what might be considered the “meta” goals of a national broadband policy: what it means for other aspects of governance and society.

These include civic participation, public safety and homeland security, community development, health care delivery, energy independence and efficiency, education, worker training, private sector investment, entrepreneurial activity, and job creation and economic growth.

If the federal stimulus funding is the first inning of the game, perhaps we should begin to think of broadband policy as the first game in a championship series – the end result of which could only be clear after the policy comes forth in February 2010.

–Drew Clark, Editor, **BroadbandCensus.com**



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## THE WEEK'S LINKS...

### Muni Network Prevails in State Court as Utility

A state appeals court ruled in favor of the municipal fiber network sponsored by Monticello, Minn. The town defended its right to proceed with municipal broadband development while awaiting broadband coverage from telecom-provider and plaintiff, **TDS Telecom**. <http://www.muninetworks.org/content/monticello-wins-appeal> Because Monticello persuaded the court that internet coverage was a "utility" rather than a luxury, the town was within its right in building a government-financed network. <http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/news/2009/06/monticello-appeals-court-win.ars>

### U.S. Broadband Struggles to Keep Up Globally

Continuing its efforts to expedite the federal broadband stimulus funds by pushing the **National Telecommunications Information Administration** to partner with states, the **National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners** (NARUC) is concerned that the NTIA's possible delay in awarding stimulus funds, until December, might lead to a winter delay in construction. <http://www.informationweek.com/news/government/stimulus/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=217701324&subSection=News> Consultant **Craig Settles** pointed to the critical role of the federal chief information officer in coordinating between government agencies and private providers, which may be central in promoting local broadband deployment. [http://www.govtech.com/gt/692952?id=692952&topic=117699&full=1&story\\_pg=1](http://www.govtech.com/gt/692952?id=692952&topic=117699&full=1&story_pg=1) Compare U.S. progress to more than five million Koreans using broadband speeds of more than 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) [http://www.telecomskorea.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=7371&Itemid=2](http://www.telecomskorea.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7371&Itemid=2) and Britain's largest retailer, **BT**, with over 4.8 million customers, who has released its plan to double broadband speeds from 20 Mbps to 40 Mbps at no extra fee. It appears to be an effort to keep up with cable operator Virgin Media and their 50 Mbps broadband offer. <http://blog.broadbandinternetuk.com/blog/240/bt-customers-to-get-free-broadband-speed-boost> and <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssTechMediaTelecomNews/idUSL4100022420090604> In America, President Obama reminded the nation in a White House briefing of the June 12 deadline in the transition to digital television that will also open additional radio frequency spectrum for broadband communication. [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Statement-by-the-President-on-the-Transition-to-All-Digital-Programming-6-4-09/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Statement-by-the-President-on-the-Transition-to-All-Digital-Programming-6-4-09/) and <http://www.reuters.com/article/televisionNews/idUSTRE5537ZL20090604> and [http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/278388-President\\_Urges\\_DTV\\_Readiness\\_Before\\_It\\_s\\_Too\\_Late.php?rssid=20065](http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/278388-President_Urges_DTV_Readiness_Before_It_s_Too_Late.php?rssid=20065)

### Transparency in the Web 2.0 World

The **Office of Science and Technology Policy** is asking citizens what they would like to see from the Obama Administration for a more open government system through the "Open Government Brainstorm," <http://blog.ostp.gov/2009/06/04/transparency-governance/> and <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/Discussion-Phase-Transparency-Principles/> and <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/Wrap-Up-of-the-Open-Government-Brainstorming-Transparency/> including the creation of an FDA Transparency Task Force <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/Transparency-at-the-FDA/> and **Norm Eisen's** release of a White House blog updating ARRA lobbying rules with plans for online documentation of all conversations. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/Update-on-Recovery-Act-Lobbying-Rules-New-Limits-on-Special-Interest-Influence/> Recently appointed to the novel Chief Technology Officer position by Obama, **Aneesh Chopra** challenged the administration to increase innovative open government policies in order to stimulate economic growth. <http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/06/03/the-nations-cto-lays-out-his-priorities/> **Craigslist** founder **Craig Newmark** will do his part in D.C. to push for Web 2.0 governmental policy, said at the **Computers, Freedom, and Privacy Conference** held this week at **George Washington University**. <http://techdailydose.nationaljournal.com/2009/06/craigslist-founder-seeks-large.php>

## BroadbandCensus.com

is a premium provider of news, information and events about broadband technology and internet policy. BroadbandCensus.com is at the forefront of understanding and explaining the implementation of the \$7.2 billion broadband stimulus package on the federal, state and local level. Since January 2008, BroadbandCensus.com has been building a public, transparent and freely accessible database about local broadband speeds, prices, availability, reliability and competition.

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