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**National  
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**COMMERCE DEPARTMENT'S NTIA ANNOUNCES RECOVERY ACT INVESTMENT TO  
EXPAND BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS AND SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**Project to Improve Broadband Adoption by People with Disabilities**

WASHINGTON - The Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today announced a nearly \$15 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act investment to help bridge the technological divide, boost economic growth, and improve communications for people with disabilities nationwide.

The grant to Communication Service for the Deaf, Inc. (CSD) intends to expand broadband adoption among people who are deaf and hard of hearing and provide them with tools to more fully participate in the digital economy. CSD's Project Endeavor plans to employ a mix of discounted broadband service and specialized computers, technology training from an online state-of-the-art support center customized to the community's needs, public access to videophones at community anchor institutions across the country, and a nationwide outreach initiative.

"Project Endeavor is a great example of how the Recovery Act broadband investments will improve economic opportunities and the quality of life for many Americans," Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling said. "It is also a reminder of the need to bridge the digital divide for people with disabilities, especially when broadband service and technologies can be that vital link to employment, education, and health care."

CSD plans to add new staff, proficient in sign language, to its contact center in South Dakota and expects to train up to 200,000 people who are deaf and hard of hearing in the use of video, real-time text-based communications, and other specialized broadband technologies. The project also intends to facilitate improved access to enhanced 911 public safety services by those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided a total of \$7.2 billion to the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to fund projects that will expand access to and adoption of broadband services. NTIA is utilizing \$4.7 billion of that funding for grants to deploy broadband infrastructure in the United States, expand public computer center capacity, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service.

Today's announcement is part of the second round of BTOP grant awards, which will continue on a rolling basis. NTIA will make all BTOP awards by September 30, 2010, and has thus far invested in 112 BTOP grants to benefit communities nationwide.

Fact sheets with further information about all BTOP grants are available on the NTIA program web site here: <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandUSA>.