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**National
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NTIA UNVEILS PROGRAM TO HELP STATES MAP INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE
Program to Help Create National Broadband Map, Consumers with Service Availability

WASHINGTON - The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today announced details of a grant program to fund collection of state-level broadband data, as well as state-wide broadband mapping and planning, which will assist NTIA in creating a national broadband map. This initiative will provide consumers with better information on the broadband services available to them and inform efforts to increase broadband availability nationwide.

“This program satisfies Congress’ mandate that we collect comprehensive information on broadband in America,” said NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling. “These data will be used to create the national broadband map, and in addition states will be able to create their own broadband maps tailored to their specific needs. These will be important tools for understanding and improving broadband access and adoption in the United States.”

The State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program is a competitive, merit-based 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 approximately \$240 million in grants to assist states or their designees to develop state-specific data on the deployment levels and adoption rates of broadband services. These data, including publicly available state-wide broadband maps, will also be used to develop the comprehensive, interactive 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 broadband service providers will have the option to make their identity available.

NTIA’s grant awards can also include funding for state broadband planning. Planning projects may include, for example, efforts to identify barriers to broadband adoption in a state and creation of local technology planning teams. Awardees will be required to provide at least 20 percent non-federal matching funds toward project costs.

While the BDIA mandates that each state may have only a single, eligible entity perform the mapping, each state’s applicant will be carefully evaluated under the standards described in NTIA's Notice of

Funds Availability. If an applicant does not meet the program standards, it will not receive funding and NTIA may perform the necessary broadband data collection.

Applications will be accepted through the online grants.gov system from July 14, 2009, at 8 a.m. EDT until August 14, 2009.