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**National  
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**COMMERCE ANNOUNCES RECOVERY ACT INVESTMENT TO  
EXPAND BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS AND SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN  
GUAM AND THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

**WASHINGTON** – The Commerce Department’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today announced an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act investment to help bridge the technological divide, boost economic growth, create jobs, and improve education and healthcare in the Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The \$8 million grant will increase broadband access and adoption by upgrading the existing telecommunications network serving these remote and underserved areas. The project is expected to directly connect more than 400 community institutions to the broadband network, including community colleges, K-12 schools, libraries, healthcare facilities, and public-safety organizations.

With this grant, Island Telephone and Engineering (IT&E) plans to bring the first high-capacity broadband services to Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. In addition to upgrading existing network infrastructure, IT&E plans to replace the existing inter-island transmission system using fiber, 3G wireless, and WiMax technology. The speed of the planned network will enable government agencies, schools, and businesses in these remote island locations to benefit from videoconferencing and other advanced broadband capabilities.

NTIA’s Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the Recovery Act, provides grants to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service.

“Broadband plays a critical role in helping communities achieve durable, sustainable economic growth,” Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling said. “Like the grant announced today, the strongest proposals we have received are the ones that have taken a truly comprehensive view of the communities to be served and have engaged as many key members of the communities as possible in developing the projects.”

NTIA received more than 1,800 applications proposing projects totaling nearly \$19 billion during the first BTOP funding round and has just received a second round of BTOP applications.

The Recovery Act provided a total of \$7.2 billion to NTIA and the Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to fund projects that will expand access to and adoption of

broadband services. Of that funding, NTIA will utilize \$4.7 billion for grants to deploy broadband infrastructure in the United States, expand public computer center capacity, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service. NTIA will announce all grant awards by September 30, 2010.

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

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