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**COMMERCE DEPARTMENT'S NTIA AWARDS GRANT FOR BROADBAND MAPPING
AND PLANNING IN NEW JERSEY**

Recovery Act Funding to Lay Groundwork for Enhanced Internet Services

WASHINGTON – The Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today announced that it has awarded a grant to fund broadband mapping and planning activities in New Jersey 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.

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. NTIA has now awarded 52 grants totaling approximately \$99 million under the program, including today's announcement, and the agency expects to finish announcing awards under this program in early 2010.

"Congress rightly recognized that increasing broadband access and adoption in communities being left behind in the 21st Century economy depends on better data collection and broadband planning. Our goal is to carry out this initiative on schedule and at the lowest cost necessary to do the job right," said Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling. "We have now awarded all but four of the grants in the program and will continue to work with the remaining applicants so they can bring the benefits of broadband to more of their citizens."

New Jersey: NTIA has awarded the New Jersey Office of Information Technology approximately \$1.5 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 in New Jersey, bringing the total grant award to approximately \$2 million. The Office of Information Technology is the designated entity for the state of New Jersey.

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.

All awardees, except the Territorial governments in Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, 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.