



December 15, 2008

The Honorable Harry M. Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Reid, Senator McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Representative Boehner:

As the burgeoning economic downturn grows deeper every day, Congress is tasked with providing not just short term economic relief, but with crafting a plan to bring the American economy into the 21st Century and the economic stability and prosperity such changes entail. As every dollar allocated to economic stimulus is scrutinized and questioned, there remains one infrastructure project that has all the elements to provide short term economic relief, and can also modernize the American economy to the benefit of American workers: Widespread broadband deployment.

As a short term investment broadband deployment enjoys unique advantages over traditional infrastructure projects. In many cases, broadband projects can begin in 30 days or less once funding is made available to complete the proposed project. Jobs created by initial installations are high paying blue collar positions which require minimal additional training. Depending on the size of the deployment, job completion can be tracked in a matter of months, not years, allowing broadband's myriad benefits to be utilized sooner. Even when deployment is finished, the economic improvements broadband brings with it are just beginning.

Over the long term broadband deployment helps virtually every economic sector. Schools and universities are better equipped to educate students and provide the American work force with qualified, skilled employees. Hospitals and medical facilities can collaborate using high-tech telemedicine resources, providing excellent health care to citizens regardless of where they might live. Businesses of all sizes are able to compete in a global marketplace, reaching customers far beyond the bounds of a brick and mortar storefront. Employees can access jobs half a world away, seizing opportunities that were once unavailable without having to relocate. The benefits of broadband deployment over the long term are transformative, but need support to be realized.

The Honorable Harry M. Reid
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
December 15, 2008

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
The Honorable John Boehner
Page 2 of 2

For every dollar invested in broadband the economy sees a ten fold return on that investment. By helping to connect our communities to the infrastructure of the 21st Century, Congress can ensure that American workers are not only able to compete, but thrive in these uncertain times. NATOA, on behalf of its members, urges Congress to make broadband deployment a key part of any economic stimulus package, and to partner with our communities to see that no American goes without the benefits of broadband.

Sincerely,

Libby Beaty
Executive Director