



California Emerging Technology Fund
Statement on FCC National Broadband Plan
Connecting America: National Broadband Plan
March 2010

The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to closing the Digital Divide in California, commends the Administration and Congress for their foresight and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for preparing *Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan*. It sets forth a bold vision and aggressive proposals for the nation and focuses a spotlight on broadband as essential 21st century infrastructure for the United States to remain economically competitive globally. The FCC goals and recommendations are aligned with the CETF Strategic Action Plan.

The CETF Board of Directors recommends the following considerations and actions:

- The FCC, Administration and Congress should work through states' established approaches, frameworks and organizations to implement *The National Broadband Plan*. In California, the established institutions include the Governor's Office of the Chief Information Officer, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), and California Emerging Technology Fund. In addition, there is active leadership on broadband issues from the California Legislature. California has a broadband plan titled *The State of Connectivity – Building Innovation Through Broadband* which was released in January 2008 by the Governor's California Broadband Task Force in cooperation with the Legislature. CETF (referenced on page 189) was established pursuant to a 2005 directive from the CPUC in approving mergers of SBC-AT&T and Verizon –MCI. CETF has adopted goals, metrics and strategies for closing the Digital Divide in California. The CPUC also established the California Advanced Services Fund to encourage broadband deployment into unserved and underserved communities. Thus, California can be an effective partner with the federal government in implementing *The Plan*.
- The FCC should incorporate "Smart Housing Policies" into *The National Broadband Plan* to encourage and/or require that all publicly-subsidized housing (new construction and rehabilitated) provide affordable broadband to all residents. The 4th recommendation in *The Plan* regarding policies addresses several program applications consistent with the CETF Strategic Action Plan: health care; education; economic opportunity; energy and the environment; government performance and civic engagement; and public safety and homeland security. However, *The Plan* does not include "Smart Housing Policies" which is one of the most effective strategies to reaching lower-income disadvantaged populations to empower them with digital literacy tools and the benefits of broadband.
- The FCC should underscore the importance of promoting policies to interconnect the energy grid with broadband networks to ensure real-time automated energy use monitoring.

Overview

Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan

The FCC National Broadband Plan recommends a goal of 90% adoption by 2020. The California Emerging Technology Fund has adopted a goal of 80% adoption by 2015 and 90% adoption by 2020 (with no region nor demographic group greater than 10 percentage points below the overall statewide adoption rate which was 62% in 2009).

The FCC National Broadband Plan has 4 Recommendations and 6 Long-Term Goals as follows:

4 Recommendations

1. Design policies to ensure robust competition and, as a result, maximize consumer welfare, innovation and investment.
2. Ensure efficient allocation and management of assets government controls or influences, such as spectrum, poles, and rights-of-way, to encourage network upgrades and competitive entry.
3. Reform current universal service mechanisms to support deployment of broadband and voice in high-cost areas; and ensure that low-income Americans can afford broadband; and in addition, support efforts to boost adoption and utilization.
4. Reform laws, policies, standards and incentives to maximize the benefits of broadband in sectors government influences significantly, such as public education, health care and government operations.

6 Long-Term Goals

- At least 100 million U.S. homes should have affordable access to actual download speeds of at least 100 megabits per second and actual upload speeds of at least 50 megabits per second.
- The United States should lead the world in mobile innovation, with the fastest and most extensive wireless networks of any nation.
- Every American should have affordable access to robust broadband service, and the means and skills to subscribe if they so choose.
- Every American community should have affordable access to at least 1 gigabit per second broadband service to anchor institutions such as schools, hospitals and government buildings.
- To ensure the safety of the American people, every first responder should have access to a nationwide, wireless, interoperable broadband public safety network.
- To ensure that America leads in the clean energy economy, every American should be able to use broadband to track and manage their real-time energy consumption.