

## \$7.2 Billion available for Broadband

**VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN LAUNCHES INITIATIVE TO BRING BROADBAND, JOBS TO MORE AMERICANS** Announces Availability Of The \$4 Billion In Recovery Act Loans And Grants To Increase Broadband Access And Adoption WATTSBURG, Pa., July 1, 2009 &ndash; Vice President Biden today announced the availability of \$4 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act loans and grants to help bring broadband service to un-served and underserved communities across America. This is the first round of Recovery Act funding aimed at expanding broadband access to help bridge the technological divide and create jobs building out Internet infrastructure. Vice President Biden was joined today by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Julius Genachowski and Congresswoman Kathy Dahlkemper at Seneca High School, the first stop on the President's National Rural Tour.

"Today's announcement is a first step toward realizing President Obama's vision of a nationwide 21st-century communications infrastructure &ndash; one that encourages economic growth, enhances America's global competitiveness and helps address many of America's most pressing challenges," said Vice President Biden. The Recovery Act provided a total of \$7.2 billion to the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to accelerate broadband deployment in areas of the country that have been without the high-speed infrastructure. Of that funding, NTIA will utilize \$4.7 billion to deploy broadband infrastructure in un-served and underserved areas in the United States, expand public computer center capacity and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service. RUS will invest \$2.5 billion to facilitate broadband deployment in rural communities. "The Department of Agriculture's Broadband Initiatives Program will bring high-speed Internet service to communities across the country, create thousands of jobs, and improve economic, healthcare, and educational opportunities available in rural communities," Vilsack said. "This funding is a down payment on the President's commitment to bring the educational and economic benefits of the internet to all communities." "The Commerce Department's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program will reach the last frontiers of America's information landscape, and the investments it makes in inner-city neighborhoods and rural communities will spur innovation and pave the way for private capital to follow," Secretary Locke said. "This first wave of funding will help create jobs, jumpstart additional investment and provide model projects that can better inform our national broadband strategy." "Access to high-speed Internet is no longer a luxury, but an essential tool to compete in this 21st-century economy. The availability of this technology is critical to attracting the business and development that will create the good paying jobs that stay in the United States," said Congresswoman Dahlkemper. "I am so pleased that Vice President Biden and the administration chose Western Pennsylvania to announce this critical broadband initiative - a region that will benefit from this strategic investment." NTIA and RUS will be accepting applications for loans, grants and loan/grant combinations to be awarded by each agency under a single application form. This collaborative approach will ensure that the agencies' activities are complementary and integrated, make the best use of taxpayer funds and make it easier for applicants to apply for funding. This is the first of three rounds of funding the Agriculture and Commerce Departments will provide. Vice President Biden also announced today that Commerce and USDA officials will host public workshops in July to share information about the funding availabilities and the application process. Forums will be held in Boston, Mass.; Charleston, W.Va.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Memphis, Tenn.; Lonoke, Ark.; Birmingham, Ala.; Billings, Mont.; Albuquerque, N.M.; and Los Angeles, Calif. Applications will be accepted beginning July 14, 2009, through 5:00 p.m. EDT on August 14, 2009. The complete details of this Notice of Funding Availability are available at <http://www.broadbandusa.gov/>. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009. It is designed to jumpstart the nation's economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. The act includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief and protect those in greatest need. More information about efforts regarding the Recovery Act is available at [www.usda.gov/recovery](http://www.usda.gov/recovery), [www.commerce.gov/recovery](http://www.commerce.gov/recovery) and <http://www.recovery.gov/>.