

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**Unleashing the Educational Power of Broadband Symposium**

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice advises interested persons that the Federal Communications Commission is holding a symposium exploring the educational power of broadband. A news release announcing the event was released on September 8, 2004 and an expanded release with an agenda was released on September 29, 2004, both of which were posted on the Commission's website.

DATES: Wednesday, October 6, 2004, 9 a.m., to 4 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons may join the meeting at the Federal Communications Commission, Commission Meeting Room, Room TW-A402 and TW-A442, 445 12th St. SW., Washington, DC 20554.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah Whitesell, 202-418-1941, Sarah.Whitesell@fcc.gov. Press Contact, Meribeth McCarrick, (202) 418-0654, Meribeth.McCarrick@fcc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is to explore ways to use broadband to facilitate learning in schools, libraries and the home. Among the presenters will be participants in the Schools and Libraries Universal Service program, also called "e-rate," which was established as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to provide affordable telecommunications services for all eligible schools and libraries, especially those in rural and economically disadvantaged areas. Speakers will also include teachers and librarians with first-hand experience using digital resources and assessing their impact on learning. The Federal Communications Commission will attempt to accommodate as many people as possible. However, admittance will be limited to the seating available. A live RealAudio feed will be available over the Internet; information on how to tune in can be found at the Commission's Web site <http://www.fcc.gov>.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene H. Dortch,
Secretary.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[GN Docket No. 04-54; FCC 04-208]

Availability of Advanced Telecommunications Capability in the United States

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice; report to congress.

SUMMARY: This Report concludes the Commission's fourth inquiry under section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This Report finds that the overall goal of section 706 is being met, and that advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed on a reasonable and timely basis to all Americans.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Regina Brown, Wireline Competition Bureau, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, (202) 418-7400, TTY (202) 418-0484.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a summary of the Commission's *Fourth Report to Congress* in GN Docket No. 04-54 released on September 9, 2004. The full text of this document is available for public inspection during regular business hours in the FCC Reference Center, Room CY-A257, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554.

I. Introduction

1. Section 706 of the 1996 Telecommunications Act directs both the Commission and the states to encourage deployment of advanced telecommunications capability to all Americans on a reasonable and timely basis. In conjunction with this objective, Congress directed the Commission to conduct regular inquiries concerning whether advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed to all Americans on a reasonable and timely basis and, based on our findings, to take action to accelerate deployment, if necessary.

2. This *Fourth Report to Congress* (Fourth Report) concludes the Commission's fourth inquiry into the availability of advanced telecommunications capability in the United States. Like the previous three reports, this *Fourth Report* finds that the overall goal of section 706 is being met, and that advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed on a reasonable and timely basis to all Americans.

3. In the *Fourth Report*, we use the terms "advanced telecommunications capability" and "advanced services" to

mean services and facilities with an upstream (customer-to-provider) and downstream (provider-to-customer) transmission speed of 200 kbps or greater. Such facilities and services are referred to as "broadband" throughout this report, and, as the report details, they include both wireline (telephone company and cable) as well as a growing list of wireless facilities, both licensed and unlicensed. This *Fourth Report* focuses on services and facilities that provide 200 kbps upstream and downstream transmission speeds. In contrast, we use the term "high-speed" to describe services with more than 200 kbps capability in at least one direction.

4. Our existing definitions are not static. The success of first-generation broadband—at speeds of approximately 200 kbps—has prompted demand for ever-faster broadband networks and connections, and today most broadband providers are offering service well in excess of the minimum 200 kbps speed. The Commission currently has under consideration rule changes that will enable us to gather more information about these "next-generation" broadband networks and services for purposes of future reports.

5. This *Fourth Report* documents the significant development of new Internet-based services, and new access technologies that has taken place since the issuance of our last report in 2002. The best-known of these new Internet-based services is the commercial deployment of voice communications over the Internet Protocol network. The remarkable growth in Internet access is highlighted by the expansion of Wi-Fi Internet access and the explosive growth of both commercial and noncommercial hotspots. Wi-Fi joins an increasingly lengthy list of other wired and wireless methods of accessing the Internet, a list that also includes WiMax, personal area networks, satellite technologies, fiber-to-the-home, and broadband over power lines, in addition to more familiar cable modem and digital subscriber line (DSL) services.

6. The *Fourth Report* also documents that subscribership to these networks and services has increased significantly since the issuance of our last report. Specifically, subscribership to high-speed lines almost tripled from 9.6 million in June 2001 to 28.2 million in December 2003, and subscribership to advanced services more than tripled in this same period, from 5.9 million lines to 20.3 million lines. In addition, the number of residential and small business subscribers to high-speed services has more than tripled during the same period, from 7.8 million lines