BROADBAND.GOV

State and Local Governments: Toolkits and Best Practices

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Broadband Background

- Mississippi Broadband Task Force
  - Founded in 2004
  - Recommended statewide initiative to promote citizens' use of the Internet with a plan and broadband strategy.
- Mississippi Broadband Technology Development Act (Miss. Code Ann. § 57-87-1 et seq.)
  - Tax (5% - 15%) credits for investments made between 2003 and 2013.
  - Sales tax exemptions ranging from 50 % to 100 %.
  - Allows tax credit to be used for nine consecutive years after the year in which it is earned.
  - Amends state law to allow sale of equipment to telecomm entities for use in broadband deployment be exempt from 1/2 of the state sales tax.
  - Waives sales tax for equipment used in the most rural areas.

The John C. Stennis Institute of Government

Mississippi Quick Facts

- Digital Divide:
  - 71% of households in Mississippi earning less than $15,000 per year do not own a computer compared to 52% of all Mississippi's households and 38% of all households nationally.
  - 78% of households in Mississippi earning less than $15,000 per year do not use the Internet at home compared to 61% of all Mississippi's households and 45% of all households nationally.
  - 9% of all Mississippi's households have broadband compared to 20% of all households nationally.
  - Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Mississippi ranks 51st in percentage of households with a computer, 51st in percentage of households with Internet access, and 50th in percentage of households with broadband access.

Mississippi Progress

- Broadband Mapping
  - Consumers' knowledge gaps about broadband infrastructure:
    - **<u>Availability:</u>** 14% of non-broadband users say they can't get it, but such self-reporting can be subject to error.
    - **<u>Speed:</u>** 83% of broadband users can't say what their home connection speed is, even though 1/3 pay extra for more speed.
    - **<u>Providers:</u>** 22% of broadband subscribers (in 2004) said they didn't know how many providers were available in their area.
  - Researchers' data gaps and needs about broadband:
    - Granular data
    - Standard data collection across jurisdictions
    - Participation in the mapping process

Mississippi Progress

- Mississippi Broadband Task Force
  - Office of the Governor
  - MS Department of Information Technology Services
  - MS Public Service Commission
  - MS Development Authority

- Request for Information
  - Submit written proposal, 10 pages in length
  - Potential for in-person interview

Mississippi Progress

- ## Broadband Mapping
  - Competitive RFP
  - Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) to serve as State Designated Entity.

- ## BTOP – Sustainable Adoption Program
  - Create local broadband planning and awareness teams in every county of the state,
  - Deploy curriculum to educate Mississippians about broadband-enabled applications,
  - Provide information to citizens about managing their health online,
  - Increase digital literacy among the state's unemployed and underemployed,
  - Focus on the Mississippi Delta Region (the Delta), and
  - Enhance the access and digital literacy of youth and the elderly.

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