CONNECTING AMERICA: THE NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN

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PREFACE

The staff of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) created the National Broadband Plan. To an extraordinary extent, however, the author of this plan is America itself.

The FCC started the process of creating this plan with a Notice of Inquiry in April 2009. Thirty-six public workshops held at the FCC and streamed online, which drew more than 10,000 in-person or online attendees, provided the framework for the ideas contained within the plan. These ideas were then refined based on replies to 31 public notices, which generated some 23,000 comments totaling about 74,000 pages from more than 700 parties. The FCC also received about 1,100 *ex parte* filings totaling some 13,000 pages and nine public hearings were held throughout the country to further clarify the issues addressed in the plan.

The FCC also engaged in significant collaboration and conversations with other government agencies and Congress, since the scope of the plan included many issues outside of the FCC's traditional expertise. Many people from across government contributed expertise and advice along the way, for which the FCC staff is eternally grateful.

The Internet also provided new ways to involve the public. Through an innovative Web presence at www.broadband.gov, the FCC posted more than 130 blog entries and received nearly 1,500 comments in return. The FCC's Twitter feed now has more than 330,000 followers, making it the third most popular government Twitter feed after the White House and the Centers for Disease Control.

The FCC staff digested this extensive record and worked long hours analyzing and debating the record. Every comment cannot be referenced in the plan, but they were all read, considered and valued.

Public comment on the plan does not end here. The record will guide the path forward through the rulemaking process at the FCC, in Congress and across the Executive Branch, as all consider how best to implement the plan's recommendations. The public will continue to have opportunities to provide further input all along this path.

This is America's plan, written by and for Americans. It's now time to act and invest in our nation's future by bringing the power and promise of broadband to us all.

THE OMNIBUS BROADBAND INITIATIVE (OBI)