

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DEAF ACTION CENTER AWARDED FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS

SHREVEPORT – The Betty and Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center has been awarded \$1.4 million in broadband expansion grants from the United States Department of Commerce.

“The Board of Directors is extremely proud of this award and honored to receive these federal stimulus funds. The Center already has the only Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) program in Louisiana, and this will help make it one of the best in the nation,” said Gregory Kallenberg, Board Co-chair. “We have played a vital role in providing state-of-the art services to our community for over 25 years.”

VRI provides video connections to live American Sign Language interpreters through high-speed internet service. “And all this at a lower cost,” according to Executive Director David Hylan. “With these additional funds the Center will partner with Tandberg, Inc. and SKC Smart Communications to install 81 new video-conferencing stations--and enhance services at 19 existing stations--to serve the Deaf and hard of hearing across Louisiana, as well as sites in Alabama, California, and Texas. The new equipment will enable us to greatly improve access to health care, legal services, job training, and educational opportunities.”

The program was established in 2006, in partnership with the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf, the United Way, private industry, local donors, and private foundations. “The new funds will help put our Deaf and hard of hearing citizens to work with job opportunities that would not have been available to them before,” stated Heidi Kallenberg, co-chair of the Board of Directors for the Betty and Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center. “And I’m very excited about the virtual training opportunities we will be providing many other Deaf needing employment, as well as up-and-coming sign language interpreters. This will positively impact so many families.”

The grant funds were made available to the Department of Commerce Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, passed by Congress and signed by President Obama last year.

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LANDRIEU WELCOMES OVER \$1.3 MILLION IN BROADBAND GRANTS FOR DEAF ACTION CENTER

WASHINGTON – United States Senator Mary L. Landrieu, D-La., Chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, today welcomed over \$1.3 million in broadband expansion grants from the Department of Commerce Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) for The Betty and Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center in Shreveport, Louisiana.

“The The Betty and Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center has been a longtime advocate for people with hearing disabilities,” Sen. Landrieu said. “Since 2006, the AccessAmerica Video Remote Interpreting project has provided low-cost remote American Sign Language interpretation to institutions across Louisiana. With these funds, the Deaf Action Center will be able to install 81 new videoconferencing stations, and enhance services at 19 existing stations that serve individuals who have hearing disabilities across Louisiana, and in sites in Alabama, California and Texas. Enhancing these services will allow the Deaf Action Center to improve delivery of health care information, legal services, job training, and education to people who are deaf by offering low-cost interpretation services. The funds will provide our hearing disabled citizens with job opportunities that might not have previously been available to them.”

“This is a great day for persons who are Deaf or hard of hearing and living in our service areas,” said David Hylan, Executive Director of The Betty and Leonard Phillips Deaf Action Center. “We are proud to be chosen through this funding to provide such a valuable service.”

The funds from the Department of Commerce Broadband Technology Opportunity Program were made available from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Applications for the second round of funding are currently being accepted. Guides for applying for these funds can be found by clicking here.

Senator Landrieu has been an avid supporter of expanding broadband internet service to rural America to create jobs and spur small business growth. To view more of Sen. Landrieu’s broadband efforts, please click here.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SECRETARY LOCKE ANNOUNCES RECOVERY ACT INVESTMENTS TO
EXPAND BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS AND SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke today announced 23 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act investments to help bridge the technological divide, boost economic growth, create jobs and improve education and healthcare cross the country. The grants will increase broadband access and adoption in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin and West Virginia. The grants, totaling more than \$160 million, will lay the groundwork to bring high-speed Internet access to millions of households and businesses, and link up thousands of schools, hospitals, libraries, and public safety offices to the information superhighway.

“In a globalized 21st century economy, when you don’t have regular access to the Internet, you don’t have access to all the educational and employment opportunities it provides. Fast, reliable Internet can help keep communities safer, open doors for small businesses and provide job training and skills to more Americans,” Locke said. “Over the long-term, enabling our people to create new products and new ways of doing business will help communities throughout the country get onto a sustainable growth path, and that’s what the Recovery Act is all about.”

The Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the Recovery Act, provides grants to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service.

“The level of interest in this program has been extraordinary, and is yet another indicator of the critical role broadband plays in achieving durable, sustainable economic growth,” Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Lawrence E. Strickling said. “Like the grants announced today, the strongest proposals are the ones that have taken a truly comprehensive view of the communities to be served and have engaged as many key members of the communities as possible in developing the projects.”

The following grants were announced today:

California: Level 3 EON, LLC: \$3.3 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$1.1 million applicant-provided match to build 11 new access points on Level 3’s existing broadband network. These additional points of interconnection – essentially on-ramps to the Internet – will offer broadband speeds between 50 Mbps and 10 Gbps on an open and nondiscriminatory basis to local Internet service providers, enabling them to provide enhanced broadband capabilities to as many as 240,000 households, 9,900 businesses, and 240 anchor institutions, including schools, government agencies, and healthcare providers.

Florida: Level 3 EON, LLC: \$2.1 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$689,000 applicant-provided match to build seven new access points on Level 3's existing broadband network. These additional points of interconnection will offer broadband speeds between 50 Mbps and 10 Gbps on an open and nondiscriminatory basis to local Internet service providers, enabling them to provide enhanced broadband capabilities to as many as 180,000 households, 12,300 businesses, and 100 community anchor institutions, including schools, government agencies, and healthcare providers.

Florida: School Board of Miami-Dade County: \$3.5 million sustainable broadband adoption grant with an additional \$996,000 applicant-provided match to increase broadband adoption among low-income middle school students and their families by an estimated 15,000 households. The project plans to offer 60,000 hours of computer training to 30,000 students and their parents, provide low-cost refurbished laptops to 6,000 students and their families, and offer discounted Internet service to 10,000 families.

Georgia: Columbia County Information Technology Department: \$13.5 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$4.5 million applicant-provided match to build a 220-mile, county-wide fiber network to connect nearly 150 community anchor institutions and enhance healthcare, public safety, and government services throughout the region. The project plans to facilitate the creation of a high-capacity data center at the Medical College of Georgia, support a sophisticated county-wide traffic and water control system, enable 60 free Wi-Fi hotspots in public locations, and construct five wireless towers to enhance public safety communications as well as improve wireless communications capabilities throughout the region.

Georgia: Level 3 EON, LLC: \$1.4 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$476,000 applicant-provided match to build four new access points on Level 3's existing broadband network. These additional points of interconnection – essentially on-ramps to the Internet – will offer broadband speeds between 50 Mbps and 10 Gbps on an open and nondiscriminatory basis to local Internet service providers, enabling them to provide enhanced broadband capabilities to as many as 198,000 households, 13,000 businesses, and 190 anchor institutions, including schools, government agencies, and healthcare providers.

Illinois: Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois: \$22.5 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$6.8 million applicant-provided match to construct 187 miles of fiber-optic broadband network in Urbana, Champaign and Savoy to provide high-speed connectivity to community anchor institutions, and support fiber-to-the-home services in four low-income neighborhoods. The project expects to provide speeds of at least 100 Mbps to directly connect 143 anchor institutions, including schools, social service agencies, healthcare facilities, youth centers, public library systems and higher education institutions.

Indiana: Educational Networks of America, Inc.: \$14.3 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$4 million applicant-provided match to improve educational opportunities for an estimated 290,000 students and library patrons by deploying 560 miles of fiber that will deliver 100 Mbps connections to 145 public schools and libraries. In addition, the project expects to spur affordable broadband Internet service for as many as 200,000 households, 30,000 businesses and 630 community anchor institutions by enabling local Internet providers to connect to the project's open network.

Kansas: Level 3 EON, LLC: \$998,000 broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$333,000 applicant-provided match to build four new access points on Level 3's existing broadband network. These additional points of interconnection will offer broadband speeds between 50 Mbps and 10 Gbps

on an open and nondiscriminatory basis to local Internet service providers, enabling them to provide enhanced broadband capabilities to as many as 50,000 households, 3,600 businesses and 150 community anchor institutions, including schools, government agencies, and healthcare providers.

Louisiana: Deaf Action Center of Louisiana: \$1.4 million public computer center grant with an additional \$436,000 applicant-provided match to install 81 new videoconferencing stations, and enhance the user experience at 19 existing stations that serve people who are deaf and hard of hearing in Northwest Louisiana, and individual sites in Alabama, California, and Texas. The project intends to use broadband and videoconference technology to provide on-demand, cost-effective sign language interpretation at community anchor institutions such as hospitals, courts, public safety agencies, shelters, schools and libraries.

Massachusetts: OpenCape Corporation: \$32 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$8.3 million applicant-provided match to deploy 350 miles of fiber and over 100 miles of microwave broadband network links in the Cape Cod region, directly connecting more than 70 anchor institutions, including emergency shelters, libraries, colleges, academic research facilities and town or public safety facilities. These anchors would receive 100 Mbs service, allowing them to support a wide range of economic, educational, public safety and healthcare-related applications.

Massachusetts: Cambridge Housing Authority: \$699,000 public computer center grant with an additional \$541,000 applicant-provided match to reopen and expand three public computer centers that serve approximately 10,000 public housing residents, including low-income households, immigrants, seniors and minorities. The Cambridge Housing Authority intends to replace 24 workstations and add 16 new ones at the centers to serve an expected 420 new users per week with access to broadband technology, computer courses, job training and literacy programs.

Maryland: Coppin State University: \$932,000 public computer center grant with an additional \$275,000 applicant-provided match to provide broadband access and computer education to the Coppin Heights-Rosemont community, a low-income neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland with a high minority population. Consistent with the community's existing revitalization plan, Coppin State University will establish a 60-workstation computer center for use by the local community, and anticipates offering 15 training and educational courses on a regular basis, serving more than an estimated 500 users per week and more than 12,000 unique users within two years.

North Carolina: Mitchell County Historic Courthouse Foundation: \$239,000 public computer center grant with an additional \$60,000 applicant-provided match to more than double the number of public computer workstations available to residents of Mitchell County, provide job training and educational courses through the local community college and extension service, and expand broadband Internet access by creating a Wi-Fi hotspot in the newly-renovated historic courthouse that will reach the adjacent library and parts of downtown Bakersville, North Carolina.

New Mexico: Santa Fe Civic Housing Authority: \$176,000 public computer center grant with an additional \$52,000 applicant-provided match to expand the capacity of one public computer center and create an additional public computer center at two public housing sites, offering broadband access and computer training to low-income families, minorities, disadvantaged youth, disabled, and elderly Santa Fe residents. The project expects to add 13 new broadband workstations and replace seven workstations, enabling the centers to increase the number of users served per week from 27 to 135.

Ohio: OneCommunity: \$18.7 million sustainable broadband adoption grant with an additional \$4.8 million applicant-provided match to employ a collaborative strategy to expand broadband adoption by almost 20,000 households in targeted communities in five states. OneCommunity plans to work with non-profit and community organizations to implement neighbor-to-neighbor broadband adoption and awareness campaigns reaching an estimated 334,000 low-income individuals, and provide training and services to an estimated 33,000 people in Akron, Cleveland, and Zanesville, Ohio; Detroit, Michigan; Gulfport/Biloxi, Mississippi; Lexington, Kentucky and Bradenton, Florida. *(This project benefits Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, and Mississippi as well.)*

Oregon: Lane Council of Governments: \$8.3 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$2.1 million applicant-provided match to enhance an existing fiber-optic backbone and deploy 124 miles of fiber-optic network that will deliver broadband capabilities across three large, mostly rural counties and the Klamath Tribal region in Western Oregon. The project plans to enhance education, healthcare delivery, job training, and government services by providing 100 Mbs connections for more than 100 community anchor institutions, including medical centers, public safety entities, schools, community colleges and libraries.

Puerto Rico: Iniciativa Tecnológica Centro Oriental, Inc. (INTECO, Inc.): \$12.9 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$3.4 million applicant-provided match to deploy a multifaceted 515 mile network that will include both wireless and fiber connections in some of the neediest areas of Puerto Rico. The project plans to directly connect nearly 250 anchor institutions including schools, hospitals, municipal facilities, police stations and libraries. It will also facilitate new or improved broadband Internet access for local consumers, including up to 300 anchor institutions, 136,000 households, and 600 businesses and industrial centers, by enabling local service providers to connect to the project's open network.

Tennessee: Level 3 EON: \$1.3 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$432,000 applicant-provided match to build four new access points on Level 3's existing broadband network. These additional points of interconnection will offer broadband speeds between 50 Mbps and 10 Gbps on an open and nondiscriminatory basis to local Internet service providers, enabling them to provide enhanced broadband capabilities to as many as 188,000 households, 9,600 businesses, and 150 community anchor institutions, including schools, government agencies and healthcare providers.

Tennessee: DeltaCom, Inc.: \$9.4 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$2.3 million applicant-provided match to provide a 544-mile high-capacity fiber-optic broadband network that will provide high-speed connections for more than 50 community anchor institutions in five Eastern Tennessee communities, from Chattanooga through Knoxville to Johnson City and Bristol. The project expects to spur more affordable broadband Internet access for over 34,000 households, 5,000 businesses, and 270 anchor institutions by allowing local Internet providers to connect to the project's open network.

Texas: Level 3 EON: \$4.7 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$1.6 million applicant-provided match to build 17 new access points on Level 3's existing broadband network. These additional points of interconnection will offer broadband speeds between 50 Mbps and 10 Gbps on an open and nondiscriminatory basis to local Internet service providers, enabling them to provide enhanced broadband capabilities to as many as 400,000 households, 21,000 businesses, and 214 community anchor institutions, including schools, government agencies and healthcare providers.

Wisconsin: The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System: \$5.1 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$3.7 million applicant-provided match to deploy more than 100 miles of fiber-optic infrastructure to provide high-capacity broadband Internet connections for community anchor institutions, and enable last-mile broadband services throughout the Madison, Middleton, and Monona, Wisconsin region. The project expects to directly connect nearly 100 community anchor institutions, including schools, public safety organizations, and a community college, at speeds of up to 10 Gbps.

West Virginia: Hardy Telecommunications, Inc.: \$3.2 million broadband infrastructure grant with an additional \$814,000 applicant-provided match to build a 177-mile high-capacity fiber-optic network to Hardy County, West Virginia, a sparsely populated region of the state with difficult terrain. The project intends to connect an estimated 35 anchor institutions, such as emergency agencies, government offices, libraries, and colleges, as well as spur more affordable high-speed Internet service for up to 1,900 households and 190 businesses by enabling local Internet service providers to connect to the project's open network.

West Virginia: WorkForce West Virginia: \$1.9 million public computer center grant with an additional \$568,000 applicant-provided match to improve access to job information, career counseling, and skills training by upgrading and expanding 20 WorkForce West Virginia One-Stop career centers throughout the state. This project intends to replace all of the existing 165 computer workstations at the centers, add 80 new workstations, and serve almost 2,300 additional users per week, nearly double their current traffic.

Fact sheets with further information about all BTOP grants are available on the NTIA web site here: <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants/projects.html>.

Funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, NTIA's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) provides grants to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas, enhance and expand public computer centers, and encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service.

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