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October 5, 2009

Marlene H. Dortch
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket No. 09-47, 09-51, and 09-137; Comments of Connected Nation, Inc. in response to NBP Public Notice #4

Dear Ms. Dortch,

In response to NBP Public Notice #4, please find attached a document containing a summary of Connected Nation research and activities relevant to FCC proceedings 09-47 (International Comparison and Consumer Survey Requirements in the Broadband Data Improvement Act); 09-51 (A National Broadband Plan for Our Future); and 09-137 (Inquiry Concerning the Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability To All Americans in a Reasonable and Timely Fashion, and Possible Steps to Accelerate Such Deployment Pursuant to Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as Amended by the Broadband Data Improvement Act) that seek, in part, to improve broadband accessibility for people with disabilities.

Sincerely,
s/
Phillip Brown
National Policy Director
Connected Nation, Inc.

Attachment

ENABLING TECHNOLOGY. EMPOWERING PEOPLE.



The Call to Connect Adults with Disabilities: A Connected Nation® Policy Brief

For the more than 54 million adults with disabilities living in America, a computer with broadband Internet access is a vital tool that can enhance the quality of life, improving independence and productivity.¹ Unfortunately, in surveys conducted across three states, Connected Nation® found that broadband adoption rates among adults with disabilities significantly lagged behind the adoption rates of those without disabilities.

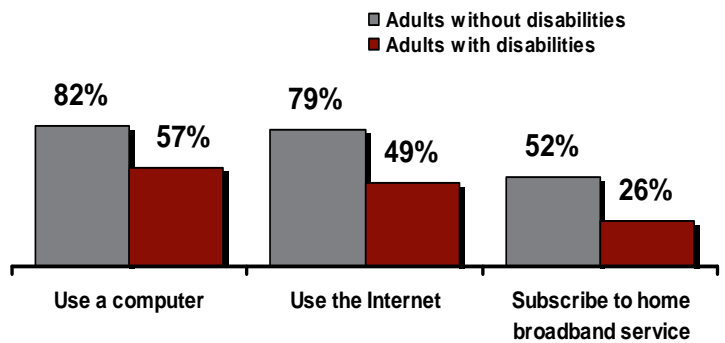
Current Challenges

- Despite the opportunities that a computer and broadband Internet access can provide adults with disabilities, only 57% of adults with disabilities use a computer and only approximately one-quarter of adults with disabilities subscribe to broadband, which if applied to the entire nation, translates into 23.4 million Americans with disabilities who lack home broadband service.

Barriers to Adoption

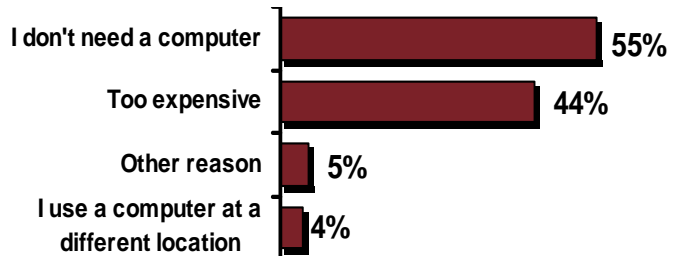
- The leading barrier to broadband adoption among adults with disabilities is the lack of a home computer.
- Challenges such as higher unemployment rates and a lower income when employed contribute to the digital divide experienced by adults with disabilities. Among adults with disabilities with no computer at home, 44% cite cost as a barrier to adoption. This translates into 11.2 million people who cannot afford a computer.
- A perceived lack of need is also a leading barrier to broadband adoption. Four out of ten adults with disabilities who do not have broadband service say that they do not need it.
- 11 percent of adults with disabilities who do not subscribe to broadband say it is because broadband service is not available where they live.

Technology Adoption



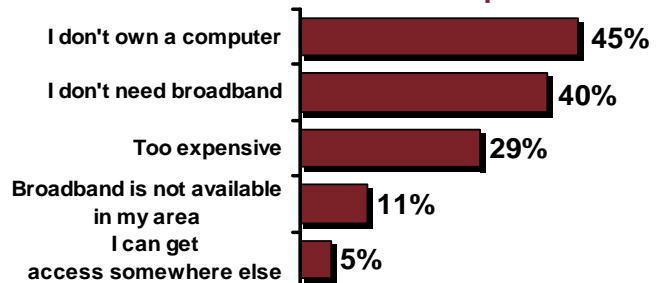
Source: 2007-2008 Residential Technology Assessments of KY, TN, and OH
n=2,810 KY, TN, and OH adults without disabilities and n=195 KY, TN, and OH adults with disabilities

Barriers to Home Computer Ownership



Source: 2007-2008 Residential Technology Assessments of KY, TN, and OH
n=96 OH, TN, and KY adults with disabilities who do not own a home computer

Barriers to Broadband Adoption



Source: 2007-2008 Residential Technology Assessments of KY, TN, and OH
n=147 OH, TN, and KY adults with disabilities who do not subscribe to home broadband service

¹ Bernstein R (2008). Number of Americans With a Disability Reaches 54.4 Million. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/PressRelease/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/013041.html

Benefits of Broadband for Adults with Disabilities:

Home broadband access is a vital communications link for adults with disabilities. By utilizing computers, adaptive hardware, and a broadband connection, adults with disabilities can gain access to greater educational opportunities, gain new avenues for meaningful employment, interact with their doctors or healthcare providers, stay in touch with friends and family, and actively participate in their local, state, and federal government.

Healthcare

- Home broadband access removes geographical barriers and allows adults with disabilities to communicate with their doctors and medical personnel from their home. Among adult Internet users with disabilities, 44% who have home broadband service interact with doctors or other healthcare professionals online, compared to 16% of adults with disabilities that do not have home broadband service. The ability to search for specialized health and medical information, interact with health insurance companies, and participate in telehealth and telemedicine is significantly improved among adults with disabilities who subscribe to home broadband service.

Civic Participation and Community Development

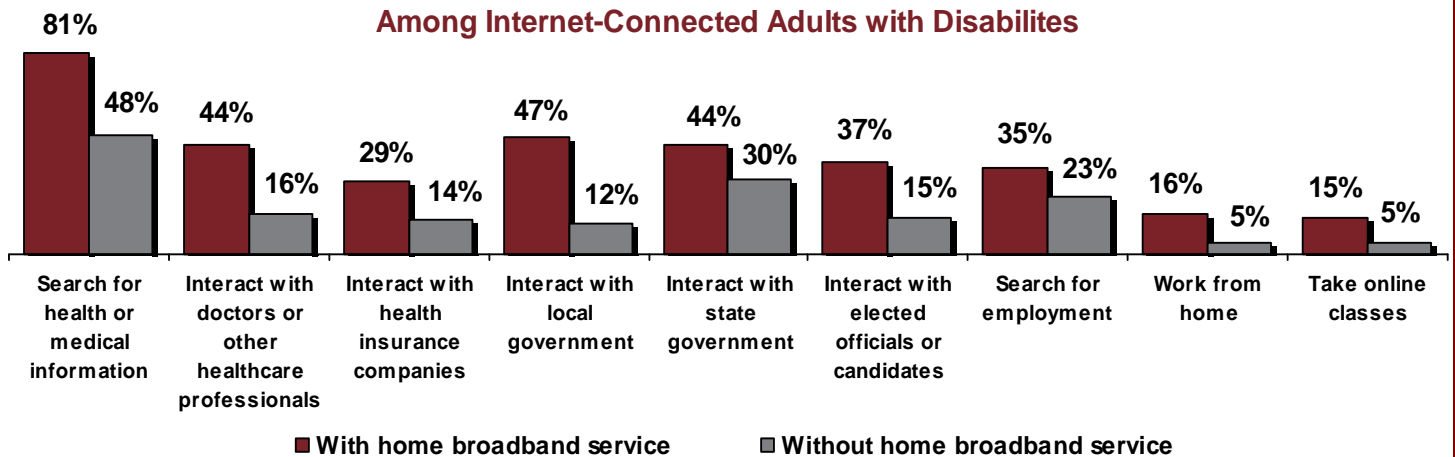
- Adults with disabilities with home broadband service are four times more likely to interact with their local government than those without broadband at home. 47% of adults with disability with broadband services at home are likely to interact with their local government, 44% are likely to interact with state government, 37% are likely to interact with elected officials or candidates. By contrast, only 12% of adults with disabilities who have no broadband service in the home are likely to contact local government, 30% are likely to contact state government and only 15% are likely to interact with elected officials and candidates. The ability to access government Web sites, contact government officials, and interact on social networking sites empowers adults with disabilities by allowing them to stay abreast of current events and have an impact on local, state and national elections.

Education and Employment

- Education and employment opportunities increase significantly among those adults with disabilities that have home broadband Internet access. A home broadband connection enables adults with disabilities to take online classes, telework, or run a business from their own home.

Online Activities

Among Internet-Connected Adults with Disabilities



Source: 2007-2008 Residential Technology Assessments of KY, TN, and OH
 n=48 residents with disabilities in OH, TN, and KY that use the Internet and have broadband at home
 n=34 residents with disabilities in OH, TN, and KY that use the Internet but do not have broadband at home

The Connected Nation[®] Response:

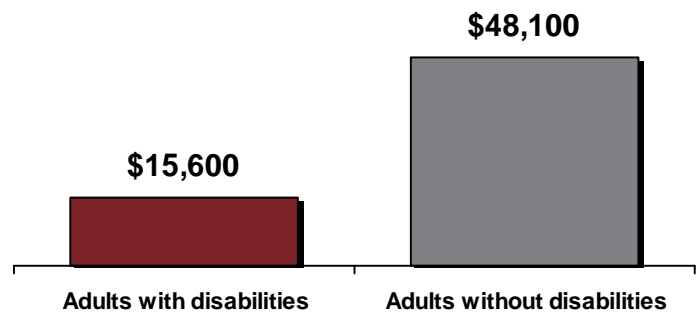
Connected Nation[®] is working to break down the barriers that prevent adults with disabilities from receiving home broadband service by accelerating broadband connectivity in underserved areas and increasing broadband accessibility, usability and affordability in every community.

Every Citizen Online^(SM) is a public-private partnership program with the goal of enabling computer ownership and broadband use in low-income and unconnected homes. The initiative seeks to leverage federal stimulus dollars to enable low-income and other unserved residents to purchase a new broadband-enabled computer of their choice at a deeply reduced price. In addition, participants will receive discounted monthly broadband service and local community support by trained experts who can help them overcome the challenges inherent in learning how to use new technology.

Every Citizen Online^(SM) targets vulnerable and low income households (e.g. families of three with household incomes at or below \$18,310) who do not own home computers. The program will overcome the top barriers to adoption by providing:

- Broadband awareness and training
- Computer ownership
- Subscription affordability

Median Annual Household Incomes



Source: 2007-2008 Residential Technology Assessments of KY, TN, and OH
n=195 adults with disabilities and 2,810 adults without disabilities

