

Importance of Broadband Technology

Statewide high-quality speed broadband Internet access is vital to sustaining Minnesota's economic recovery efforts and a healthier environment.

Most often, when we talk about our state's infrastructure, we think about our roads, bridges and sewer systems. But as our economy continues to shift and deliver more services digitally we need to have an infrastructure in place that will ensure Minnesota citizens and businesses can compete in today's dynamic global marketplace.

Expanding the availability and use of broadband technology will encourage the emergence of new business markets in Minnesota, enhance educational access, lower health care costs, increase employment opportunities, secure greater public safety, and overall improve our quality of life.

In 2010 the Minnesota Legislature adopted statewide broadband goals to ensure all Minnesotans will have access to high-quality speed Internet by 2015:

- ✓ Minnesota will be in the top five states nationally in broadband access and speed (Download speeds of 10 megabits per second and upload speeds of five megabits per second).
- ✓ Establish an advisory committee with a wide range of stakeholders to help reach our broadband goals in the most efficient and cost-effective manner.

These goals will help promote the availability and use of high-quality speed internet statewide. Minnesota communities have already secured over \$60 million in federal funding (American Recovery and Retirement Act) to improve and expand broadband internet access.

I am a strong advocate of broadband technology because it is so strongly linked to Minnesota's future economic prosperity.