



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF
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December 23, 2008

Mr. John Podesta, Co-Chair
Ms. Valerie Jarrett, Co-Chair
Mr. Peter Rouse, Co-Chair
Obama-Biden Transition Project
451 Sixth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Podesta, Ms. Jarrett, and Mr. Rouse:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts applauds the Obama-Biden transition team for including investment in broadband access as a key component of its economic recovery package. As you know, universal and affordable broadband is critical to the nation's capacity to compete and succeed in the global economy. Broadband has been shown to create jobs and is essential to key services that advance the public good, including education, health care, public safety, government efficiency, civic engagement and local democracy.

We believe it is entirely appropriate that broadband be included in a package intended to stimulate the economy in the near-term and lay the foundation for growth and prosperity in the future.

Recognizing that increased broadband availability will enhance Massachusetts' own competitive position in vital sectors of the economy and improve the overall quality of life for our citizens, Governor Deval Patrick identified ubiquitous broadband as a key element of our state's economic development strategy. In August 2008, after working with the Massachusetts Legislature, Governor Patrick signed *An Act Establishing and Funding the Massachusetts Broadband Institute*, which established the Massachusetts Broadband Institute under the existing Massachusetts Technology Collaborative and dedicated up to \$40 million in general-obligation broadband bond funds for the purpose of bringing affordable broadband, through a public-private partnership model, to those citizens in Massachusetts currently without access.

Through the public-private partnership model, we are authorizing the use of the state bond funds for investment in selected long-lived components of broadband infrastructure, such as conduit,

fiber and wireless towers. These components will then be made available to private firms to offset their cost of providing service to previously unserved homes and businesses.

Toward this end, as the incoming Administration considers economic policy proposals relative to broadband during the transition period, the Patrick-Murray Administration, through the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, respectfully submits the enclosed memorandum on broadband policy objectives. We believe this memorandum will help to inform the transitions team's work by characterizing the landscape of public broadband stimulus programs already underway and by providing the transition team with a sense of the range of orientations found in existing programs. The memorandum also includes suggestions for particular forms of new federal investment that would be most compatible with existing programs and therefore most likely to produce immediate results.

On behalf of the Patrick-Murray Administration, I thank you for the opportunity to share our approach to bridging the digital divide in Massachusetts and offer suggestions for federal action around this issue. Should you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (617) 788-3600.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dan O'Connell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Daniel O'Connell

Enclosure