

**REMARKS BY
SECRETARY DONALD L. EVANS
BROADBAND ANNOUNCEMENT AT SBC COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
WASHINGTON, D.C.
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(Text As Prepared for Delivery)**

Thanks Connie (Browning, SBC Ohio President) Thank you Governor Taft for all of your hard work. And thank you all for coming. I'm glad to be here to say congratulations and thank you to SBC officials for your commitment to our citizens and this \$4 to \$6 billion investment in America's communities.

President Bush has called for universal, affordable access to broadband technology by the year 2007. And he has made policies that support investment and deployment of advanced networks a top priority. Today marks a giant step in our goal.

First, let me point out that this announcement by SBC means jobs, jobs, jobs for Ohio and the 12 other states where SBC operates. There's a lot of equipment and infrastructure needs and that's good news for workers.

In fact, a recent study by CSE Freedom Works Foundation found that in Ohio, widespread, rapid deployment of broadband would be responsible for the direct and indirect creation of more than 43,000 new jobs. The study estimated it would add more than \$16 billion to Ohio's economy.

But this investment also puts us on firm footing to becoming a more efficient, productive and innovative economy.

Here's why. Broadband, or high-speed internet, IS the future. It's four to 100 times faster than the dial-up access that so many Americans currently use. It's going to allow us to move information quicker. And that's going improve our economy.

In a recent study, 3 out of 4 small businesses said that high-speed Internet service improved productivity. Nearly two-thirds said it made their business more profitable. And I'm not sure if you know this, but small businesses are the economic engine of our society.

They've consistently generated between 60 and 80 percent of the jobs in our economy.

But it's not just the economy that benefits. Broadband will give millions of Americans a better quality of life. With this investment alone, SBC plans to bring super high-speed data, video and voice services to 18 million homes by 2007.

Just imagine with me for a moment, a rural patient, here in Ohio who has been traveling miles and miles each month to see a specialist in Cleveland. With access to this technology, many of those trips can be eliminated. The patient would be able to have a consultation right there in his hometown, thanks to broadband-enabled telemedicine.

Or what about the students here in Columbus, who will be able to link up in real-time to a lecture by a professor at the University of Texas and hear him explain the latest cutting-edge research. Think about the potential that holds for the millions of public school students across America.

All of these things become reality as more and more homes, businesses, schools and hospitals gain access to broadband.

And that's why I applaud SBC for its investment as well as Verizon, which last week made a similar announcement. Let me close with this: America is the fastest growing major industrialized nation. Yet, we rank 10th or 11th when it comes to per capita use of broadband technology. We must do better or we'll lose the technological edge that has made the United States the leader of the free world.

These companies are creating jobs, improving lives and helping our nation stay on the cutting edge of technology. Thank you for all that you do.