



## **Governor Culver and Iowa Utilities Board Announce Major Step Forward in Iowa's High-Speed Internet Expansion Effort**

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**Des Moines, IA** – Governor Culver and the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) unveiled a major step forward Wednesday in the Connect Iowa initiative. A new, detailed report is now available on the Connect Iowa website ([www.connectiowa.org](http://www.connectiowa.org)) that offers the state's first look at key broadband market data that will be used to form a clear, strategic plan for broadband expansion in Iowa. The *Iowa Broadband: Current Market Analysis & Initial Recommendations for Acceleration of Iowa's Broadband Market* [report](#) is a key element in planning to increase high-speed Internet access and adoption across the state.

"We are engaging citizens and stakeholders statewide as part of the process to build a broadband action plan. The data and analysis in this report point us in the right direction," said Brian Mefford, Connected Nation's CEO.

The report provides a detailed review of the current state of broadband in Iowa and is already sparking discussion across multiple broadband stakeholders in the state on key goals and strategies to expand and enhance broadband service.

"While it is encouraging that 95% of Iowa households currently have broadband availability, Connect Iowa's findings that 34% of residents are not adopting the technology is an area of great concern. This shows that digital literacy, demand stimulation, and technology training efforts will continue to be important for urban, suburban, and rural residents alike," said Carolyn D. King, urban representative of the Broadband Deployment Governance Board.

The Iowa Utilities Board conducted the initial assessment of the state's broadband landscape based on the data collected from the Connect Iowa mapping and planning initiative. The report is being used in collaboration with the work of the Iowa Broadband Deployment Governance Board.

"The data contained in this report will be invaluable to the IBDGB as it works toward its goal of stimulating the growth and availability of high-speed broadband in Iowa," said Krista Tanner, IUB member and chair of the IBDGB. "While the

report shows that about 95 percent of Iowans have access to broadband today, the report also highlights that fewer Iowans have access to broadband at the higher speeds that will be necessary to compete in tomorrow's economy. The IBDGB will use this data as a springboard to engage stakeholders like elected officials, civic leaders, educators, economic developers, and private entrepreneurs to help them better understand Iowa's broadband challenges. The IBDGB will rely on insights from these key stakeholders as it works to overcome these challenges and create an action plan for Iowa's future."

The 58-page assessment gives a snapshot of current broadband availability and usage in Iowa, defines where and why availability gaps exist with detailed supporting research, offers strategy and policy recommendations to close the gaps, and presents a thorough technology assessment of Iowa's current broadband service infrastructure.

On June 18, 2010, Governor Chet Culver announced the release of the state's interactive broadband mapping application through the Connect Iowa initiative. Connect Iowa is funded through a \$2.2 million award by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to launch the initiative in the state and carry out the work over a five-year period. Under the NTIA State Broadband Data and Development grant program, Connect Iowa is charged with creating statewide awareness, mapping, and maintaining the state broadband inventory for two years, and conduct planning efforts for a period of five years. These funds are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

All Iowa residents are encouraged to visit the Connect Iowa website, [www.connectiowa.org](http://www.connectiowa.org), to join in this important initiative and offer feedback. The website gives residents a one-stop portal where they can find broadband providers at their address, check their current Internet speeds, notify officials of unserved areas, and share stories of how high-speed Internet has impacted their lives.

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#### **Related Links:**

Press Release: [Governor Culver Announces Launch of Broadband Availability Map](#)

Press Release: [Iowa Awarded \\$2.2 Million For Broadband Initiative](#)

Report Fact Sheet: [Iowa Broadband: Current Market Analysis & Initial Recommendations for Acceleration of Iowa's Broadband Market](#)

**About Connect Iowa:** Connect Iowa is a subsidiary of Connected Nation and operates as a nonprofit in the state of Iowa. The Iowa Utilities Board and the

Iowa Broadband Deployment Governance Board are leading the initiative to increase broadband Internet access throughout rural Iowa. Connect Iowa was commissioned by the Iowa Utilities Board to work with all broadband providers in the state of Iowa to create detailed maps of broadband coverage in order to accurately pinpoint remaining gaps in broadband availability in Iowa. This work will support the activities of the Iowa Broadband Deployment Governance Board, which includes developing a statewide plan for the deployment and adoption of broadband in the state. For more information visit: [www.connectiowa.org](http://www.connectiowa.org).