



WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION

A National Wireless Broadband Strategy

Broadband is a transforming technology that is essential to facilitating innovation and improving our quality of life. With next generation broadband networks, our ability to communicate is limited only by the human imagination. Video, voice, photographs, animation, graphics, text, documents, and other data of all kinds can be transmitted by anyone to anyone in real-time using broadband networks. The resulting collaboration is sparking a revolution in productivity and enabling the innovation that is so essential to our future prosperity.

Universal broadband access at affordable prices is a national strategic imperative. Continued progress in the deployment and adoption of broadband technology is vital to ensuring that the United States remains competitive worldwide. Many Americans still lack access to affordable broadband services, and adoption rates among lower income Americans have begun to flatten. For America to remain competitive in a global economy, it must connect everyone to broadband networks at affordable prices, no matter who they are or where they live. Universal broadband access at affordable prices is a national strategic imperative for the United States in the 21st Century.

Wireless platforms are essential to achieving universal broadband access. Broadband access policies have historically focused on wired platforms. Although wired platforms will continue to play an important role in universal broadband access, wireless platforms also have an essential role to play. Wireless broadband platforms offer solutions that can overcome many of the challenges of bringing wired broadband to rural and underserved communities. Facilities-based wireless broadband platforms also provide a robust, viable competitor to wired service platforms, leading to reduced prices, increased consumer choice, and fierce, disruptive innovation. But wireless platforms are more than simply an alternative to wired platforms for broadband connectivity at home. As the only broadband platform that is capable of providing access everywhere, all the time, wireless broadband platforms offer mobility – a connection to every person whether at home or on the go. These capabilities make wireless broadband essential to achieving universal broadband connectivity.

The Wireless Communications Association International recommends the following strategies for achieving universal wireless broadband connectivity.

To achieve universal wireless broadband access, the Wireless Communications Association International recommends the following strategies.

- **Promote policies that minimize barriers to the deployment of wireless broadband infrastructure and encourage additional investment.**

The deployment of wireless broadband infrastructure is often challenging. Local zoning restrictions, state and local taxes, federal regulations, radiofrequency coordination, financing, backhaul and other issues can all present barriers to infrastructure deployment and discourage additional investment. Although many of these barriers are the result of important policy considerations, their impact on the national strategic imperative of universal broadband access has too often been an afterthought. America must find the right balance between rapid wireless broadband deployment and other considerations. Policy makers should minimize barriers to deployment and encourage additional investment in wireless broadband infrastructure whenever possible.

- **Promote policies that advance the proliferation of wireless broadband services.**

Wireless broadband services are still in their infancy. The initial fourth-generation (or 4G) networks are only beginning to be deployed and some fourth generation standards are still in development. These 4G networks are transforming the wireless industry and inspiring innovation in the way mobile services are accessed and enjoyed. As this transformation evolves, service providers and application developers will need to respond quickly to the unique network and service management challenges posed by the inherently shared, nomadic, and personal nature of wireless broadband services. When evaluating regulatory policies in this rapidly changing, nascent environment, the overriding priority should be to maximize the proliferation of innovative, transformational wireless broadband services, consistent with other critical policy objectives.

- **Reform universal service policies to support affordable, universal wireless broadband access.**

Mobile wireless broadband services provide unique value to consumers. Without the ability to access broadband services everywhere, consumers will not be able to take advantage of the ever-increasing array of broadband applications designed for use with mobile services. For broadband access to be truly universal, underserved and rural consumers should have the same opportunities for mobility enjoyed by everyone else. Any definition of universal broadband service should include a mobility component.

- **Maximize spectrum resources for wireless broadband.**

To support the most advanced wireless broadband services, wireless broadband networks require wider contiguous bandwidths than traditional cellular networks. The emergence of wireless applications that more fully integrate broadband into our daily lives will generate even more demand for contiguous wireless broadband spectrum than we have today. Although no one can accurately predict how much additional spectrum will be required to support robust competition in a fully interconnected world, more spectrum will likely be needed in wider contiguous bandwidths than have typically been made available.

To maximize the potential of these spectrum resources, policy makers should also strive to harmonize spectrum allocations around the worldwide. Spectrum harmonization enables manufacturers and network operators to realize enormous economies of scope and scale. The resulting lower costs facilitate additional infrastructure investment, including in rural and underserved communities in the United States. To ensure that American companies and consumers obtain these benefits, we must harmonize global spectrum allocations for wireless broadband technologies to the maximum extent possible.