

ConnectKentucky Remains Dedicated to Technology Expansion for All Kentuckians



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Frankfort, Kentucky: ConnectKentucky remains dedicated to the idea that all Kentuckians can realize the promise of expanded technology for the sake of new economic opportunities, enhanced education and health services, among other community-related and quality of life benefits. During tough economic times, technology can help deliver the best of two worlds - improved services and expanded opportunities available in ways that save time and money.

Even in light of a line item veto concerning ConnectKentucky, Governor Steve Beshear has declared his support of the work of ConnectKentucky, stating that his veto was related more to the process of funding versus the funding itself. Governor Beshear reassured Kentuckians about the value and impact of ConnectKentucky: "I support wholeheartedly the continuation of the broadband initiative and accessibility of high-speed Internet throughout the Commonwealth and am proud of the great strides made by ConnectKentucky to date."

"We appreciate that even within his veto message Governor Beshear stated his support for ConnectKentucky's important work and his desire to have the Cabinet for Economic Development work with ConnectKentucky on a funding plan to further this important work," said Rene True, ConnectKentucky executive director. "We also greatly appreciate the overwhelming, bipartisan support shown by the General Assembly's intent to fund ConnectKentucky programs such as 'No Child Left Offline' which places computers in the hands of children who otherwise could not afford them."

The continued support and leadership of House Speaker Jody Richards remains a testament to the overarching reach of ConnectKentucky. "They do a good job," Richards said. "It's a national model."

ConnectKentucky's mission is to accelerate technology in ways that ensure Kentucky remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. In the days, months and years to come, ConnectKentucky looks forward to working with Governor Beshear, the Kentucky General Assembly and local leaders to continue fulfilling that mission.

Continued investment in programs that expand broadband adoption could translate to an economic impact totaling \$1.5 billion in Kentucky. The impact includes healthcare savings, creation and retention of jobs, value of time saved and offset of reduced carbon emissions.

Looking forward, if Kentucky continues to invest in an effective statewide broadband adoption strategy through ConnectKentucky, the state can expect to realize:

- \$1.06 billion in annual direct wages from jobs created or saved in Kentucky

- \$9.3 million in annual self-reported healthcare costs savings
- \$91.1 million per year in mileage savings from broadband preventing unnecessary driving
- 46.1 million lbs of CO₂ emissions reduction per year in Kentucky (\$249,000 emission credits)
- \$424.9 million value in the 52.8 millions hours saved per year from accessing broadband at home

Over the past four years, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has invested approximately \$7 million toward broadband acceleration, realizing more than \$750 million of private infrastructure investment in return. In addition to efforts in the private sector, more than 4,000 plus Kentuckians participate as volunteers in local ConnectKentucky teams, fulfilling the non-profit organization's mission to create awareness and drive increased technology literacy and use of broadband-related technology. The local activity prompted investment in the general range of "3 times more, 3 times faster" from private companies into broadband services.

ConnectKentucky has garnered national, industry-wide recognition as a national "best practice" model for broadband expansion. The model, which includes extensive broadband asset mapping, a public-private partnership and local eCommunity Leadership Teams, has been replicated in states across the country including California, Tennessee, Ohio, West Virginia and South Carolina. Additionally, the U.S. Congress is considering several bills that would enable every state in the nation to replicate the success of ConnectKentucky and bolster the competitive position of the U.S. economy.

"ConnectKentucky will continue working to expand broadband and improve the quality of related services for citizens and businesses. More importantly, we are focused on ensuring that we can realize the benefits enabled in a connected Kentucky, such as telework, enhanced education, healthier environment, improved healthcare and government services. I continue to look forward to the day when every Kentuckian can realize the meaningful impact that broadband has on their life," True said.

To learn more about ConnectKentucky, visit www.connectkentucky.org.

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About ConnectKentucky: *As a non-profit technology-based economic development organization, ConnectKentucky is working to ensure that Kentucky remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. As a public-private partnership, ConnectKentucky partners with technology-minded businesses, government entities and universities to accelerate technology in the Commonwealth.*

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