



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Governor Ernie Fletcher's Communications Office

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**RESULTS VALIDATE CONNECTKENTUCKY AS MODEL FOR
TECHNOLOGY GROWTH**

National Leaders to Promote Kentucky as Model for a "Connected Nation"

FRANKFORT, Ky. – Kentucky's growth rate for jobs in the Information Technology (IT) sector over the last two years was thirty-one times that of the national average, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. From January 2005 to December 2006, seasonally adjusted IT jobs grew by 3.1 percent in Kentucky, in comparison to .1 percent growth nationally.

Information Technology jobs encompass a variety of disciplines including: software publishers, Internet publishing and broadcasting, wired telecommunications, wireless communications, satellite communications, cable distribution and search portals and data processing. All are examples of jobs that rely largely on the availability of high-speed Internet, which has become increasingly accessible since the launch of Kentucky's *Prescription for Innovation*, the state's comprehensive plan to accelerate technology growth. The plan is facilitated by ConnectKentucky, a non-profit organization accelerating broadband Internet availability and technology literacy throughout the state.

According to Governor Ernie Fletcher, "The fact that Kentucky has outpaced tech-related job growth nationally is valuable evidence demonstrating that the work ConnectKentucky has done and continues to do for the Commonwealth is changing the face of Kentucky's economy and changing lives along the way. Supporting and attracting companies with high-tech jobs is important for Kentucky to compete in the global economy."

More than 14,500 total technology jobs have been created in Kentucky during the last two years. Over the course of the *Prescription for Innovation*, statewide broadband availability and use have increased by 53 percent and 73 percent respectively. Currently, 92 percent of Kentucky homes can access broadband, on track to reach 100 percent availability by the end of the year. An estimated 504,000 previously unserved households can now access broadband as private sector investment in telecommunications infrastructure has reached an unprecedented level in Kentucky at \$667 million.

This week, the leadership of ConnectKentucky will be in Washington, D.C. to discuss how states can accelerate technology for higher wage jobs, better education, more efficient healthcare and higher quality of life. Kentucky's *Prescription for Innovation* has been identified by national leaders as a potential model to close the "digital divide" for the entire country.

Mark McElroy, ConnectKentucky senior vice president, was invited by the Alliance for Public Technology to the U.S. Capitol to brief congressional leadership and staff regarding the ConnectKentucky model. The Alliance for Public Technology is a non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C. concerned with fostering affordable and useable access to information and communications services and technologies for all.

Brian Mefford, ConnectKentucky president and CEO, has been invited by the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation to provide testimony regarding the key elements that enabled Kentucky to move from laggard to leader in terms of expanding and using broadband and related technology. The full committee hearing entitled "Communications, Broadband and Competitiveness: How Does the U.S. Measure Up?" will occur on Tuesday, April 24 at 10 a.m. Eastern time. Members of the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee are:

Daniel K. Inouye (HI), John D. Rockefeller, IV (WV), John F. Kerry (MA), Byron L. Dorgan (ND), Barbara Boxer (CA), Bill Nelson (FL), Maria Cantwell (WA), Frank R. Lautenberg (NJ), Mark Pryor (AR), Thomas Carper (DE), Claire McCaskill (MO), Amy Klobuchar (MN), Vice Chairman Ted Stevens (AK), John McCain (AZ), Trent Lott (MS), Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX), Olympia J. Snowe (ME), Gordon H. Smith (OR), John Ensign (NV), John E. Sununu (NH), Jim DeMint (SC), David Vitter (LA) and John Thune (SD)

For more information about what ConnectKentucky is doing to accelerate technology in Kentucky's communities and to promote its model nationally, visit: www.connectkentucky.org.

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About ConnectKentucky: *ConnectKentucky connects people to technology in world-altering ways: improving the lives of the formerly disconnected; renewing hope for previously withering rural communities; driving increases in the number of tech-intensive companies and jobs; and nurturing an environment for lifetime learning, improved healthcare, and superior quality of life. ConnectKentucky develops and implements effective strategies for technology deployment, use, and literacy in Kentucky, creating both the forum and the incentive for interaction among a variety of people and entities that would not otherwise unite behind common goals and a shared vision. This level of teamwork is ensuring Kentucky remains the place of choice to work, live, and raise a family.*