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If there's one area of common ground in net neutrality, it's the need for broadband deployment.

The logic (or what passes for it) of net neutrality rests on consumers' supposed lack of broadband choices. But like the blind squirrel that occasionally finds an acorn, this has an element of truth: Yes, consumers do need better broadband choices. We've said it repeatedly. So have unions, independent experts and corporations on both sides of the debate.

That's why [this article](#) in the current Economist ought to be required reading for state and federal lawmakers. The article describes a remarkably successful Kentucky partnership to promote broadband deployment and usage:

"According to Brian Mefford, president of ConnectKentucky, a public-private partnership, a few years ago the state had among the lowest rates of broadband availability in the country. Internet service providers could not be sure that there were enough [interested users] in the Kentucky countryside to justify new investment....

"But by the end of this year, Mr Mefford boasts, 98% of residents will have access to inexpensive broadband services. This is primarily because of ConnectKentucky's effort to map broadband demand in communities that didn't have access, he says, which indicated that enough people in Kentucky farm country would sign up if providers entered the market. At the same time, the organisation also talked up high-speed internet services to skeptical residents.... Once isolated Kentuckians can now consult with doctors in faraway cities or telecommute."

The key to Kentucky's success is clear: a joint effort to promote broadband demand and new investment. Equally clear is how this approach conflicts with Net neutrality, which emphasizes regulation of existing technologies.

But the results speak for themselves and ought to be embraced by all concerned with improving U.S. broadband services.

OK, anyone want to join hands and sing Kumbaya?

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