

# Chamber, Connected Nation Launch *Connect!* Campaign, Co-Host Regional Broadband Dialogue



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**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and national non-profit Connected Nation announce *Connect!*, a national campaign to promote the importance and benefits of broadband and related technologies. The campaign kicks off with a series of regional dialogues to be held across the United States over the coming months.

“With a modest increase in broadband adoption, the U.S. could realize a total direct economic impact of \$134 billion annually including \$92 billion in new wages from the 2.4 million jobs created through broadband growth,” said Brian Mefford, CEO of Connected Nation, Inc. “To realize these results, public-private partnerships and events like these regional dialogues are necessary to foster the deployment of broadband to all communities while increasing user demand through state and local grassroots awareness and adoption campaigns.”

The dialogues will address the ability of broadband to impact everything from economic development and U.S. global competitiveness to telemedicine and education. The first dialogue will be held April 24 in Columbus, OH, and will feature a keynote speech by Governor Ted Strickland (D). Other discussions will follow in Charleston, SC; Albany, NY; Olympia, WA; Kansas City, MO; and Fargo, ND through mid-August.

“We are bringing together lawmakers, businesses, consumers, and experts in order to raise awareness on broadband use and discuss the importance of sound broadband policies and programs for the economic interests of the United States,” said William L. Kovacs, Vice President of Environment, Technology, and Regulatory Affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. “These dialogues will emphasize that the ability to engage in e-commerce is critical for U.S. businesses. E-commerce allows all businesses, no matter how small or where they are located, to sell to customers everywhere.”

"It would be wrong to think that broadband deployment is mainly about equipment, speeds, and regulatory issues. In truth, this debate is about the future of our country's 74 million children whose ladder of opportunity now has "digital rungs," said Wendy Lazarus, Founder & Co-President of The Children's Partnership and a Board member of Connected Nation. "Making sure high-speed Internet is available to all families is the key to whether America's children are prepared for the 21st century economy and able to get the education, health, and economic opportunities offered by the digital age," Lazarus said.

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**About Connected Nation:** Connected Nation is widely recognized as the nation's model for improving digital inclusion. Connected Nation expands access to and use of broadband Internet and the related technologies that are enabled when communities and families have the opportunity and desire to connect. For the United States, this means better education, more jobs, improved healthcare, more efficient government and a better quality of life.

**About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce:** The U.S. Chamber is the world's largest business federation, representing more than 3 million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region.

For more information on the broadband dialogues, please visit: [www.connectednation.org](http://www.connectednation.org) or [www.uschamber.com/telecom](http://www.uschamber.com/telecom).