ACCESS FOR ALL: IT'S TIME TO ENSURE AMERICA'S BROADBAND FUTURE

As it prepares its recommendations for Congress concerning a national broadband plan, the Commission faces the daunting challenge of crafting a policy that:

- Sustains and supports consumer access and choice;
- Ensures that consumers have the knowledge and ability to go online and understand the benefits to their lives from doing so;
- Promotes continued innovation and investment to make broadband networks – and the services, devices, and applications that use those networks – more robust, useful, and secure for consumers; and
- Ensures broadband technology continues to evolve in a way that allows it to be a vital force not only in empowering consumers but also in helping our nation overcome the myriad of challenges it faces.

Verizon has and will continue to support efforts to seek out practical approaches to address these issues and achieve the nation's broadband goals.

Indeed we all share the same ultimate objectives: to ensure that broadband helps all Americans reach their full potential and is an integral and positive force in addressing our nation's challenges. In areas as diverse as accessibility for the disability community, health care, energy efficiency, education, and workforce development, Verizon seeks to work with our public and private sector partners to foster an evolving broadband ecosystem that will support growth and prosperity in the years to come. Verizon has invested over $80 billion in capital expenditures since 2004, and with this investment we are building America's most robust wireline and wireless broadband networks

Verizon is working to build America's most robust wireline and wireless networks

that provide consumers with all of the benefits of the Internet and that are a platform for continued innovation. (See Chart 1) Also, while employing more than 213,000 tax-paying Americans, Verizon is making the investments that create good quality American jobs, stimulate our troubled economy, and secure our broadband future.

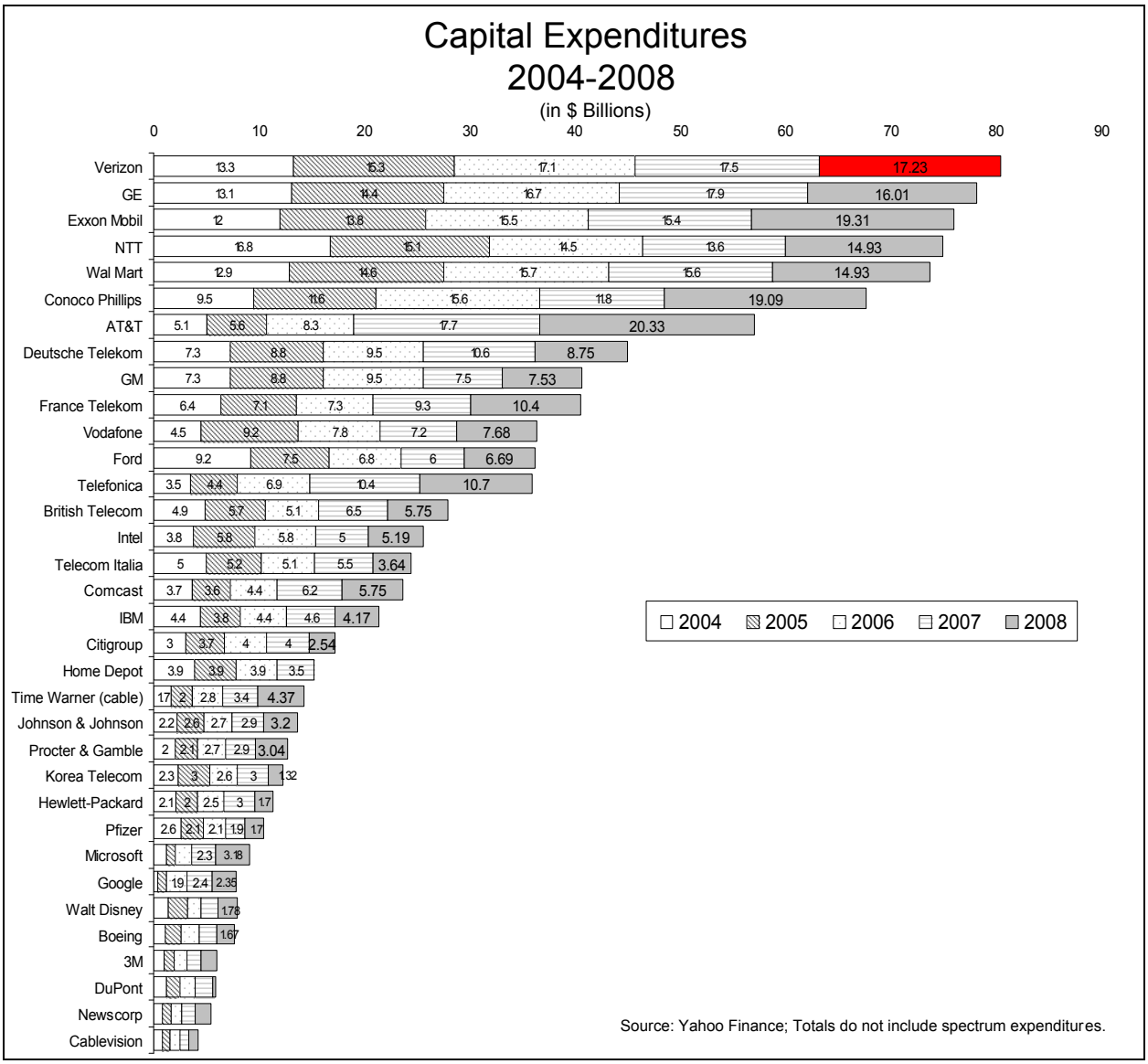

Chart 1

The Transformative Power of Broadband

In a few short years, broadband has proven to be an extraordinarily transformative technology. Broadband has already become an integral part of many Americans' lives, at work, at home, and on the go. Broadband has changed the way that people communicate and engage with the world. While the advent of the public Internet provided individuals with a place to purchase goods, e-mail friends and family, and surf the Internet, the spread of always-on broadband connections has more fundamentally changed many individuals' lives. Rather than just browsing the Internet or sending e-mails, Americans today increasingly use their computers and mobile devices to watch "television" shows or even full-length movies from sites such as Netflix and Hulu, communicate with friends over vast social networks such as Facebook and MySpace, attend school on-line and conduct job searches. For many individuals going online is no longer a fundamentally "passive" experience with data flowing downstream to the consumers' home. Instead – whether at home, in the office, or on the go – individuals post their own videos on YouTube, publish their own blogs on any imaginable topic, or remotely access and store vast amounts of information, all through the unmatched innovation of wireless and wireline broadband networks.

Individuals are using the power of broadband to organize and to engage with their communities and their government, as illustrated by the heavy reliance on broadband communications to mobilize citizens during the recent presidential election campaign. Whether using social networks to organize events, online video sites to convey messages to the public, or mobile smart phones to "twitter" or pass on other information in real time, broadband and the Internet have assumed a central role in our political system – and a growing role in day-to-day government operations – that changes the way that people participate in the democratic process.

All of these activities and more take place on Verizon's wireline and wireless networks each and every day because we build and manage the networks that connect our customers' houses and mobile devices, as well as the global networks that carry their traffic around the world. Verizon's employees are behind the scenes making sure that these networks are reliable, secure, and widely available so that our customers can go about their business and do what they want to do using broadband services and the Internet.

Broadband technology and the Internet are already integrated into many aspects of our government, society and economy, and they will continue to be put to increasingly critical uses. As noted in the recent *Cyberspace Policy Review* submitted to President Obama, "'cyberspace' underpins almost every facet of modern society and provides critical support for the U.S. economy, civil infrastructure, public safety and national security," and this reliance on broadband will only increase as "traditional telecommunications and Internet networks continue to converge, and other infrastructure sectors are adopting the Internet as a primary means of interconnectivity."[1]

The way people and institutions access and use broadband technology is still in an early evolutionary stage. The rapid changes that will continue to occur present both opportunities and challenges for broadband providers like Verizon and for other providers of services, applications and devices that rely on the Internet. Providers must continuously work to meet consumers' expectations for reliable, innovative and "always on" broadband connections while enabling more and varied uses of broadband technology. In order to keep pace with the evolving uses of broadband technology, sustained innovation and investment throughout the broadband and

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[1] *Cyberspace Policy Review: Assuring a Trusted and Resilient Information and Communications Infrastructure* (May 29, 2009).

Internet industry is required. Broadband providers and their public and private partners must manage this complexity and satisfy consumers' expectations, all while maintaining and furthering the current openness of the public Internet, increasing the choices available to consumers, and simultaneously improving our ability to address the ever-more-significant concerns related to cybersecurity.

Robust Investment and Innovation Power the Broadband Revolution

This record of broadband and the Internet is one of explosive innovation, based fundamentally on huge private investments to expand the reach and capabilities of broadband. In reliance on the flexible, pro-growth regulatory approach pursued by policymakers of both parties, the private sector has invested hundreds of billions of dollars in recent years to build and expand broadband capacity. American consumers are directly benefitting from this steady flow of investment and innovation – with ever-expanding access to next-generation wireline and wireless networks and the benefits of innovative services, applications, and devices enabled by these networks. This record of innovation bodes exceedingly well for broadband and the Internet as an important part of solving the serious challenges our nation faces, and policymakers should ensure this continued positive evolution by continuing to support the stimulative, pro-growth regulatory policies that have unleashed this torrent of private innovation and investment and created millions of jobs.

Today, well over 90 percent of Americans have access to broadband. Most consumers can choose from at least two wireline broadband providers, three or more wireless broadband providers, and two satellite broadband providers – a level of facilities-based, intermodal competition virtually unparalleled in the world. The United States is one of only a handful of

countries in the world – and, with Canada, one of only two G-8 countries – where *two* wireline broadband platforms (cable and DSL) are available to the vast majority of households,[2] and the U.S. ranks highest among OECD countries in wireless Internet penetration.[3]

The U.S. also compares favorably to the rest of the world in private investment in next-generation broadband networks, with Verizon alone having deployed more next-generation fiber-to-the-premises lines than all providers in Europe combined. These are remarkable achievements in a relatively short time and policymakers across the spectrum should take pride in having pursued a stimulative policy environment that has fostered these developments. Few, if any technologies in American history have moved from the drawing board to near-ubiquity in such short order. Moreover, Americans are now gaining access to next-generation wireline and wireless networks at a rapid rate. For example, Verizon alone has provided over 13 million homes – on its way to 18 million – with access to America's first large-scale, all-fiber broadband network for consumers. Its FiOS network already offers Internet access speeds of up to 50 Mbps downstream and 20 Mbps upstream and this network soon will deliver 100 Mbps to consumers' homes. Similarly, Verizon Wireless' third generation (3G) mobile wireless broadband service is available to more than 280 million Americans, and Verizon's even more robust fourth-generation (4G) service, LTE, is coming later this year and will be available to approximately 100 million Americans by the end of next year.

Over the past 10 years, speeds have increased almost 350 fold from ISDN at 144 kbps to FiOS at 50 Mbps today with speeds in excess of 100 Mbps coming in the near future

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[2] *See* OECD, *OECD Broadband Statistics: Penetration (OECD Broadband subscribers per 100 inhabitants - December 2008)*.

[3] *See* OECD, *Broadband Growth and Policies in OECD Countries*, at 36 (June 2008); *Implementation of Section 6002(b) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993; Annual Report and Analysis of Competitive Market Conditions With Respect to Commercial Mobile Services*, Thirteenth Report ¶ 227, WT Docket No. 08-27, DA 09-54 (Jan. 16, 2009).

To bring these next-generation broadband networks and services to more Americans, Verizon has invested more than *any* other company in *any* industry in the United States over the last several years.

Wireless download speeds have increased from 14.4 kbps to 1.4Mbps to expected speeds of 8 - 12 Mbps in the near future.

Still, challenges remain in making broadband ubiquitous. Some consumers – particularly in rural and hard-to-serve areas – remain unserved by broadband (other than satellite). In some cases, these individuals live in areas that are too remote or sparsely populated to make deployment of "last mile" facilities economical, at least using traditional technologies. In other cases, the problem could be lack of adequate "middle mile" facilities to carry traffic from distant, rural areas to the carriers who can take it to the Internet backbone. Whatever the reason, for these consumers we must ask, "how can we build on the remarkable progress we have made to ensure that all Americans have access to broadband?"

Congress and the Administration created an unprecedented opportunity to reach many of these consumers with broadband by including over $7 billion in broadband stimulus funding in the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 ("Recovery Act"). Effective use of this taxpayer money will be an important step in filling gaps in broadband availability. But the federal funding has its limits and undoubtedly more work will need to be done. A combination of approaches – building on the smart, stimulative economic and regulatory policies that unleashed broadband growth and adoption unprecedented in the history of American technology – will be required to ensure that public and private resources are unleashed completing the job of ubiquitous broadband.

Of course, access to broadband networks is necessary, but far from sufficient, in realizing the powerful potential of this broadband revolution. As an initial matter, reports indicate that approximately 80 percent of households with computers currently subscribe to broadband, which

represents enormous growth from just a few years ago. Even in areas where broadband exists, however, a significant number of Americans have not adopted broadband either because they lack the know-how, equipment, resources, or comfort level to go online or because they do not see the relevance or benefits to their lives of doing so. In fact, two-thirds of Americans who have not adopted broadband have chosen to forgo access based on socio-economic reasons including but not limited to low levels of digital literacy and computer ownership and/or simple questions of relevance. In order to expand the benefits of broadband, more Americans need to have the ability and desire to adopt it. Here too, creative policies are needed to promote more widespread adoption and use of broadband, which in turn would further spur innovation and investment to meet this new demand. (See Chart 2)

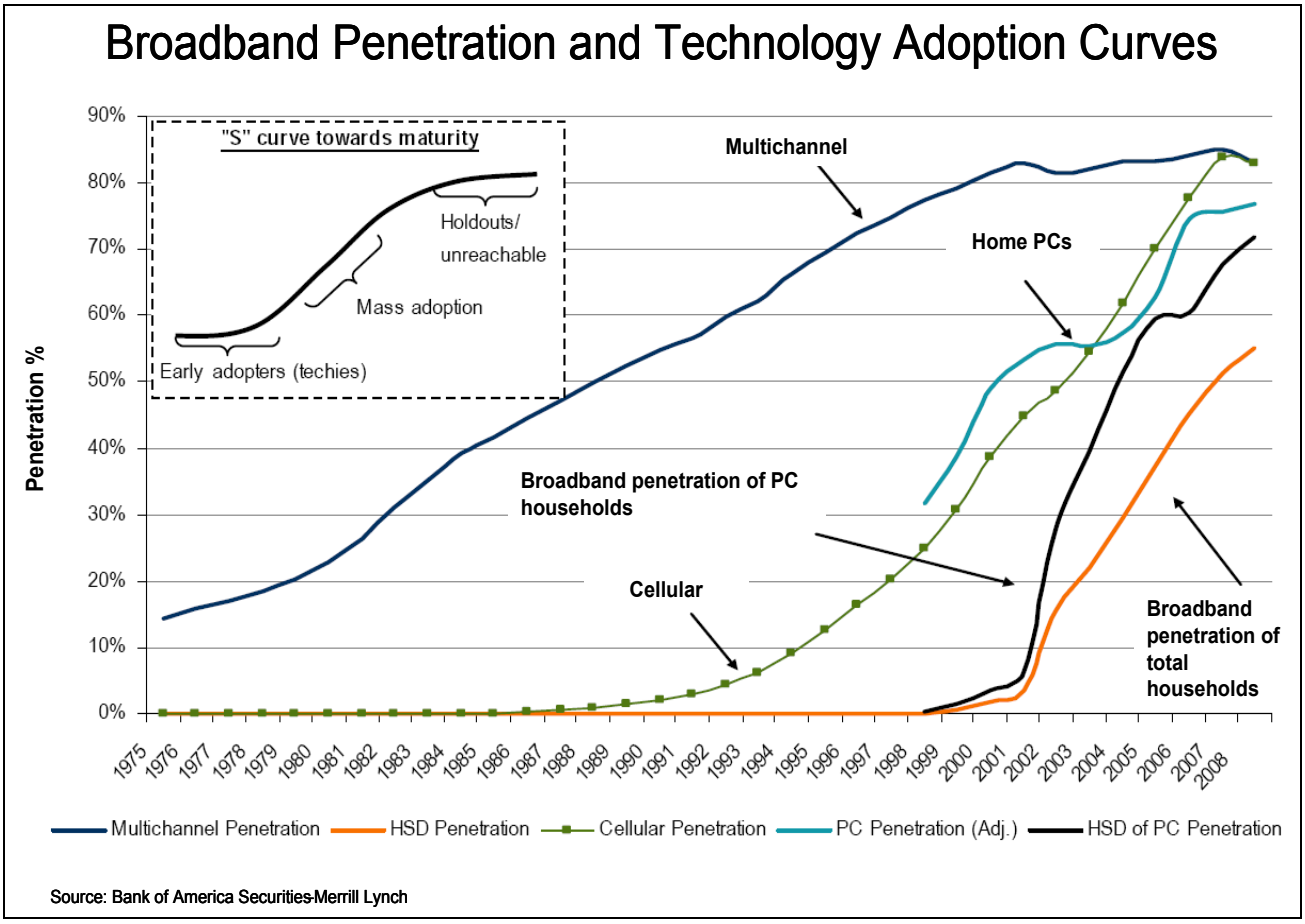

Chart 2

Similarly, even after ubiquitous broadband availability is achieved and more consumers come online, sustained innovation and investment will be required to achieve broadband's promise for consumers and to address our nation's challenges. As noted above, given the many evolving uses of broadband by consumers, businesses, and government – ranging from the entertainment to education and all the way to uses that implicate national security and critical infrastructure – broadband technology must continue to evolve in order to support these uses and to provide consumers with the range of choices that they want, all while making broadband technology and the Internet more useful, reliable and secure. The work required to build and sustain America's broadband future never stops.

Broadband Is A Force for Progress

Of course, broadband is not an end in itself, but is important because of the transformative effects that this technology can have on people's lives and in addressing many of our nation's most pressing challenges.

Accessibility. One community making increasingly effective use of broadband tools is the disability community. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 54 million Americans – or nearly one in five – live with some form of disability, and 35 million have a "severe" disability. [4]

For this community, broadband networks can open doors and enable access in a more

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[4] *See* U.S. Census Bureau, "Number of Americans With a Disability Reaches 54.4 Million," http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/013041.html (Dec. 18, 2008). Forty-six percent of Americans aged 21-64 who have a disability are employed, as compared to 84 percent of Americans in that age group without a disability. *Id.* Twenty-seven percent of Americans with a severe disability live in poverty, as compared to 9 percent of those without a disability. *Id.*

profound sense in ways that were previously impossible. Before broadband, many people with disabilities struggled to communicate with often hard-to-use legacy telephones or expensive adaptive systems or suffered professionally and academically because of limited mobility. But the widespread access to broadband networks in response to pro-growth and pro-innovation policies has resulted in much more useful communications platforms for many of these individuals, enabling more useful applications and services such as live streaming video and instant text communication or other technological approaches to delivering or receiving information, services, and products, irrespective of personal ability or geographic location. These technologies can create opportunities for individuals with disabilities to take advantage of additional educational opportunities and to enter the work force or otherwise engage in society in ways that may have previously been much more difficult.

Verizon is working to ensure that the disability community benefits from broadband. Verizon is committed to making technology accessible to everyone, and we have been working toward that goal for 15 years through our two Verizon Centers for Customers with Disabilities. These centers handled nearly 800,000 calls last year, providing or enabling communications services for people with hearing, vision, mobility, speech and cognitive limitations. Verizon also has introduced devices and services that address some concerns of individuals with disabilities. For example, Verizon Wireless recently introduced a smartphone handset loaded with TALKS software that enables consumers with vision loss or impairment to take advantage of all of the functions of a smartphone through voice commands. And Verizon's robust wireline and wireless broadband networks will continue to provide new and better ways for the disability community to communicate and engage.

Verizon's Centers for Customers with Disabilities handled 800,000 calls last year

Health Care. Nowhere is the potential for broadband's transformative power in greater evidence than in our healthcare system. In 2007 America spent nearly $2.2 trillion on health care, or $7,421 per person.[5] This is more than 50 percent higher than the next highest country in the OECD. Rising health care costs dampen our economic competitiveness globally and hinder our ability to meet other pressing challenges. Verizon is acutely aware of the significant concerns facing our health care system. Verizon spends $4 billion every year to provide health care coverage to approximately 900,000 Americans, including over 213,000 U.S. employees, plus the family of employees and retirees. Like businesses large and small across America, Verizon has a significant stake in helping create a high-quality health care system that is both affordable and accessible.

Verizon provides health insurance to about 900,000 Americans at a cost of around $4B annually

[5] Kaiser Family Foundation, *Health Care Costs: A Primer*, http://www.kff.org/insurance/upload/7670_02.pdf at 2, 4 (March 2009).

Broadband enhances the use of **Electronic Health Records**, which can lead to savings of

$81 Billion Annually*

Broadband-enabled telemedicine:

- Extends the range of healthcare to rural and unserved parts of the U.S.
- Provides effective and affordable care to rural and low-income children
- Facilitates the use of effective in-home diagnostic, monitoring, and treatment services

*Source: The Rand Corporation, a non profit research institution, (Sep. 2005)

Figure 1

Broadband has the power to improve our health care system in multiple ways. By expediting the implementation of electronic medical records and other health information technologies – "Health IT" – broadband can both dramatically lower costs and improve health outcomes. According to the RAND Corporation, the use of improved Health IT has the potential to save as much as $81 billion a year by making our health care system more efficient and improving health outcomes.[6] Health IT also holds the potential to reduce medical errors and improve patient outcomes. (See Figure 1). According to Consumers Union, as many as 100,000

[6] *See* "Rand Study Says Computerizing Medical Records Could Save $81 Billion Annually and Improve the Quality of Medical Care," http://www.rand.org/news/press.05/09.14.html (Sept. 14, 2005).

people die each year from medical errors.[7] Health IT can help prevent many of these errors by allowing access to accurate and up-to-date electronic records.

Verizon understands the benefits of Health IT and has been active in supporting initiatives to increase the use and interoperability of Health IT. In fact, Verizon is already offering the benefits of Health IT to its own employees and their families through its HealthZone initiative. The Verizon HealthZone initiative is a personal health record system that empowers employees and their family members with tools and resources they can use to take greater control of their health and health care. Among other features, the system provides personalized and confidential health care tools and resources that enable individuals to set goals for their health, and helps them make better informed health care decisions. It also allows Verizon employees and their families to analyze patient information and receive timely medication and care alerts automatically.

Realizing these and other benefits requires effective and widespread use of Health IT – built on a foundation of interoperable standards, strong security requirements to protect private health information, and ubiquitous and secure broadband networks. Policymakers took an important step by including over $22 billion in funding for Health IT in the Recovery Act and by establishing a process for the development of the interoperable standards required to facilitate the use of this technology. Verizon is committed to working with policymakers and other stakeholders to make effective Health IT a reality.

Broadband will also improve our health care system by giving doctors and other medical professionals remote, real-time access to patients—a boon to those in remote areas, the

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[7] *See* Consumers Union, *To Err Is Human – To Delay Is Deadly*, http://www.safepatientproject.org/safepatientproject.org/pdf/safepatientproject.org-ToDelayIsDeadly.pdf at 2 (May 19, 2009).

homebound, and others with issues that make access to health care difficult. Verizon's broadband networks, for example, currently provide doctors at the National Children's Medical Center and The University of Maryland Hospital in Baltimore with the ability to monitor their patients at home. The University also has had success with its "Operating Room of the Future," in which outside medical experts monitor patients and assist in surgery from remote locations in real time.

These and other innovative approaches powered by broadband have the potential to dramatically improve the efficiency of our health care system, while also improving health outcomes for patients and even saving lives. Continued innovation and investment in the broadband ecosystem – including the deployment of more robust, reliable, and secure broadband networks – will help get us there.

Energy Efficiency and the Environment. Improving energy efficiency and protecting our environment are additional public challenges that broadband can help to address. The SMART2020 Report by the Global eSustainability Initiative found that over the next 10 years, annual CO_2 emissions in the United States can be reduced 22% through the use of broadband and IT.[8] Meeting this goal of a 22% CO_2 reduction through the use of broadband and IT would translate into gross fuel and energy savings of $240 billion, equivalent to a reduction of 36% in imported oil. *Id.*

Broadband can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 22% over 10 years

Among the most promising uses of broadband to reduce energy and fight global warming would be through the development and deployment of "smart-grid" technology that improves the

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[8] *See SMART 2020: Enabling the Low Carbon Economy in the Information Age* in *SMART2020: United States Report Addendum*, http://www.gesi.org/ at 10 (Nov. 18, 2008).

efficiency of our electrical grid and empowers consumers to make better decisions concerning the use of electricity. Smart-grid technology could, for example, allow more dynamic allocation of electricity and control over the devices that use electricity. Reliable and effective communications is at the heart of smart-grid technology, and integration and use of wireline and wireless broadband networks will be the lifeblood of these efforts. Similarly, broadband technology has similar promise in the case of "smart transportation" and "smart building" technology – both of which can also increase energy efficiency and reduce our CO_2 emissions.

Verizon's teleconference and telepresence products can reduce CO_2 emissions by 3 to 4 tons for each international flight no longer required.

Broadband services can also help to increase energy efficiency by reducing the need to travel. Among other things, broadband services can enable robust teleconferencing and telepresence services that keep people in the office, rather than on the road. Verizon Business, for example, offers high-definition teleconferencing and "telepresence" products and services, which help lower costs, connect employees in distant locations and reduce CO_2 emissions by three to four tons for each international flight not taken. With additional innovation, smart broadband networks in the future could enable not only high definition, but even 3-D telepresence services that further reduce the need for business travel and the associated environmental costs.

Education and Work Force Development. Broadband can also improve the quality of our education system and better prepare our work force for the 21st Century by ensuring that all Americans have access to the resources and information that they need for a first-class education and the opportunity to develop the work skills that will let them thrive. For example, distance learning opportunities can allow a rural student who has an interest in learning Mandarin Chinese to connect remotely with a teacher and class in another location to do just that. Or an adult who has an interest in pursuing a different occupation or interest can take classes from her home

computer in the evenings, without quitting her day job.

Indeed, broadband technology offers a "viable solution to the barriers that exist for adult learners in accessing traditional classroom based education" and "can serve to raise low-skill workers out of entry level jobs and on to career pathways with sustainable self-sufficiency earnings."[9] "Self-paced, broadband-enabled learning via the Internet makes it possible for adults to participate in education and skills training and to gain the skills that are essential for entry and advancement in the knowledge economy."[10] In one pilot project seeking to deliver skills training and education to "single working poor mothers" in New Jersey, "92 percent completed [the program], and those participants experienced an average 14 percent increase in their annual wages. Additionally, 15 of these [128] women went on to pursue post-secondary education."[11]

But the nation's workforce faces challenges that exceed the ability of either the private or public sector to solve alone. We need to combine existing public initiatives with aggressive collaboration among public and private sector entities engaged in training, to share curriculum, career path frameworks and skills sets.

Verizon is directly involved in providing new educational and work force development opportunities through the use of broadband technology. The Verizon Foundation, for example, has created Thinkfinity.org, which is the cornerstone of Verizon's philanthropic literacy,

In 2008, Thinkfinity had over 24M visitors and trained over 28,000 educators from almost 3,000 schools

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[9] Heather A. McKay, "Online Learning for Low Skill Adults," http://files.speedmatters.org/online_learning_for_low_skill_adults.pdf at 1, 12 (Rutgers Center for Women and Work, May 2009).

[10] Eileen Appelbaum, "Economic Empowerment for Low-Income Workers," at 4 (May 18, 2009).

[11] McKay, *supra* at 6-7.

educational, and technology initiatives. (See Figure 2). Thinkfinity provides a free, comprehensive digital learning platform, with the goal of improving student achievement in traditional classroom settings and beyond by providing high-quality content and extensive professional development training. Thinkfinity had over 24 million visitors in 2008 and trained over 28,000 educators from almost 3,000 schools. Thinkfinity draws on the strength of several content partners – including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the National Geographic Society – to provide discipline-specific, standards-based educational resources. Thinkfinity's mission is to use emerging technologies and communication tools to provide universal access to expanded learning opportunities.

Figure 2

Job Creation and Economic Growth. While overall employment shrank by 3.8 percent from February 2008 through February 2009, employment in the information and communications technology (ICT) sector grew by 2.5 percent over that same period. *Id.* Moreover, broadband has a ripple effect on the local communities where it is offered, resulting in additional jobs even outside of the telecommunications sector and increasing the competitiveness

Increasing broadband investment by $10B could produce 500,000 new jobs

of the businesses with access to broadband.[12] In fact, one study indicates that each $10 billion increase in broadband infrastructure investment produces nearly 500,000 new jobs (including over 260,000 jobs in small businesses), and that for every one-percentage point increase in broadband penetration in a state, employment increases by 0.2 to 0.3 of a percentage point per year (or about 293,000 jobs nationally).[13] The ICT sector accounted for more than half of all jobs created in the United States between April 2007 and April 2008. *Id.*

Broadband is the cornerstone of Verizon's business, and we are doing more than any other American company to fulfill broadband's promise in the United States. We are investing more than any other company to build next-generation wireline and wireless broadband networks. These investments put people to work and create high quality jobs here in America. The building and operation of Verizon's broadband networks is a massive project employing workers around the country in good jobs. And Verizon's network-building also creates jobs with the suppliers and vendors up and down the supply chain, from the manufacturers of fiber optic cables and routers to the newspapers and television stations carrying advertising about broadband services. For example, Vermeer Manufacturing Company, based in Pella, Iowa, offers a wide range of compact horizontal directional drilling machines now being used to help deploy

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[12] *See* Robert Crandall, William Lehr and Robert Litan, *The Effects of Broadband Deployment on Output and Employment: A Cross-sectional Analysis of U.S. Data*,in *Issues in Economic Policy* No. 6 (Brookings Institution, July 2007); Robert D. Atkinson, Daniel Castro and Stephen J. Ezell, "The Digital Road to Recovery: A Stimulus Plan to Create Jobs, Boost Productivity and Revitalize America" The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation Policy Issues Report (Jan. 2009); Stephen B. Pociask, TeleNomic Research, LLC, "Building a Nationwide Broadband Network: Speeding Job Growth, " (New Millennium Research, Feb. 25, 2002).
[13] Atkinson, *supra*, at 5, 8.

Verizon's FiOS network.[14] As a direct result of Verizon's investments in FiOS, Vermeer has added to its human resource pool by acquiring solution engineers and production employees and has "doubled its production of compact directional drills." *Id.*

After the broadband networks are in place, they continue to create jobs – including high-quality information technology (IT) jobs – and stimulate the economy by providing the resources that American businesses need in order to compete effectively in the global marketplace.

Americans are receiving returns on these investments in America's broadband infrastructure. Over 13 million of Americans now have access to Verizon's next-generation, all-fiber FiOS network, and our current wireless broadband network is available to more than 280 million Americans. And Verizon continues to invest in and build next-generation broadband networks that will enable ultra-fast services. For example, Verizon Wireless purchased the spectrum license and is laying the groundwork for its fourth-generation (4G) wireless broadband network using Long Term Evolution (LTE) technology. Verizon's investments in broadband also spur competitors to respond in kind, resulting in a race to build more widespread and more robust wireline and wireless broadband networks in order to compete. American consumers – perhaps more than any other consumers in the world – receive the benefits of the resulting intermodal competition across competing wireline and wireless platforms.

While building the networks that are bringing next-generation broadband services to millions of Americans, Verizon also maintains its commitment to operating and managing our broadband networks in a manner that give consumers control and allow them to go where they want and do what they want on the Internet, while providing a powerful platform for innovation

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[14] See "Job Growth at Vermeer Manufacturing Company" in *Living Our Values: Verizon Corporate Responsibility Report 2005*, with supporting statements by Dave Wisniewski, Senior Director – Underground Business Segment, Vermeer Manufacturing.

in services, devices and applications. For example, the Verizon Wireless Open Development Initiative is aimed at unleashing the creativity and innovation of third-parties to develop new applications and devices that will run over Verizon's wireless broadband networks. And the robust Internet access services provided over the wireline FiOS network or that will be provided over the wireless 4G LTE network enable a new generation of Internet or other broadband services, applications, and devices to be developed and used here in this country. Continued innovation and investment from all quarters – including network operators, application and device developers, and providers of services delivered over the Internet – will increase the choices available to consumers and the many public benefits of broadband, and a dynamic broadband innovation ecosystem promises to make broadband and the Internet more robust, more useful and more secure for users.

Indeed, we are only at the beginning of the broadband innovation curve, and potential consumer benefits and public benefits from broadband are enormous. In response to consumer demand, and competitive necessity, and the absence of regulatory impediments, the powerful cycle of innovation and investment will continue to accelerate and the evolution of broadband technology and the Internet will develop in ways that benefit consumers. (See Figure 3). At home, at work, and on the go, consumers will continue to have an ever-expanding array of ever-more-robust broadband offerings, as well as innovative devices, applications, and services, from which to choose.

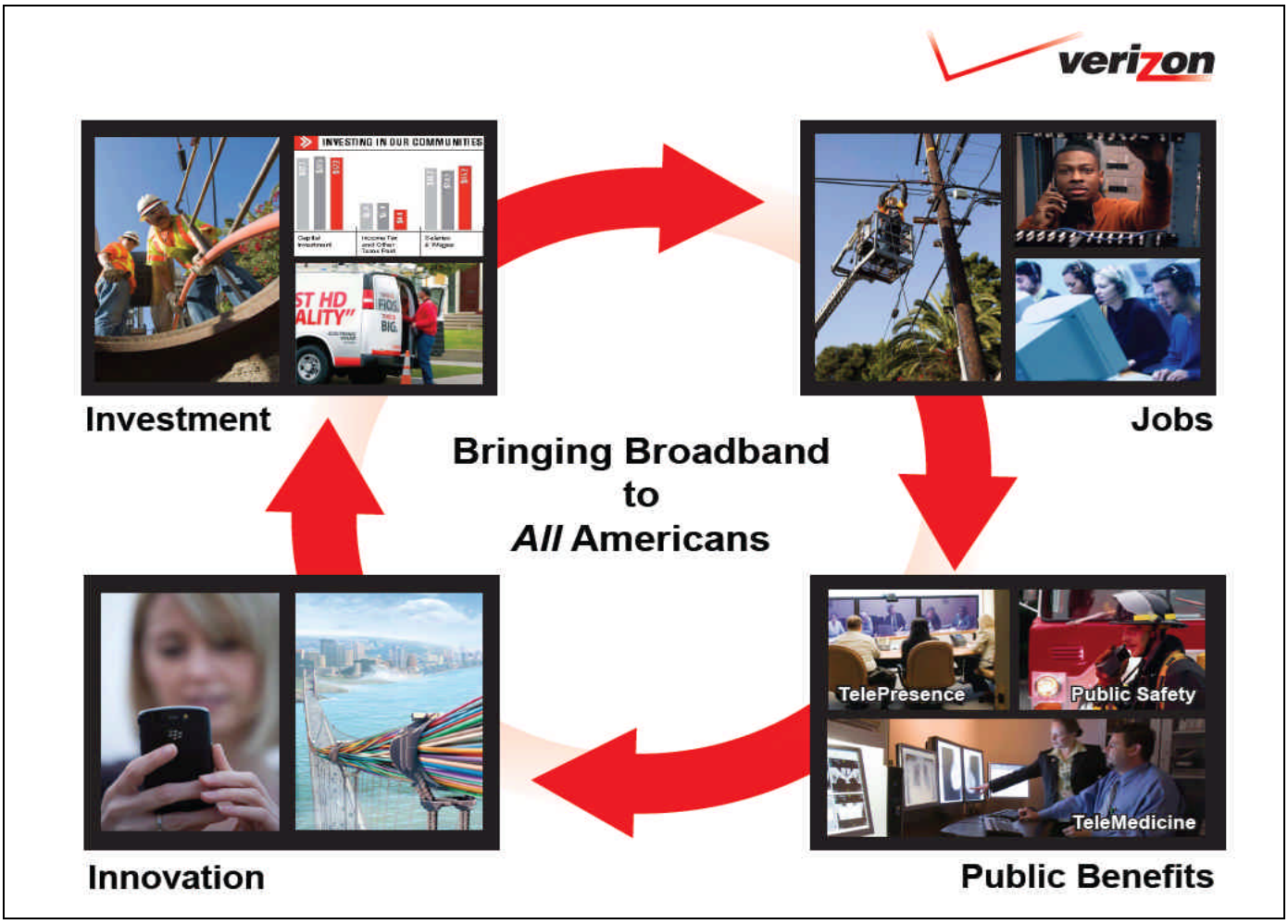

Figure 3

Today, Verizon is submitting to the Commission several suggestions concerning pragmatic approaches that would benefit consumers, foster platforms that can help address the nation's most pressing challenges, and otherwise secure America's broadband future. Verizon looks forward to working with policymakers and other stakeholders in developing broadband policies that will ensure broadband availability to all Americans, encourage the widespread adoption of broadband services, and empower consumers to make their own choices.