



# Labor Council for Latin American Advancement

*“Un Pueblo Unido: Be Powerful! Be Heard!”*

Home to the Latino Labor Movement

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Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell

June 30, 2009

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:  
Re: Docket No. 09-51 (National Broadband Plan)

The Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) is a national organization representing the interests of approximately 1.7 million Latino trade unionists. We are submitting reply comments to you today as a follow up to our initial filing in June. After reading some of the other filed comments, we found it necessary to stress the importance of making broadband ubiquitous through the creation of a National Broadband Plan. The Commission should use this opportunity to bring broadband to every home in America.

In our initial filing, we highlighted the importance of broadband in creating jobs and economic opportunity for Latino working families and all Americans. A Brookings Institutions study found that for every one percentage point increase in a state’s broadband penetration, employment increases 0.2 to 0.3 percent per year. Achieving job growth like this is critical given today’s economic climate. If broadband access was expanded universally, a goal that we believe this plan should achieve, it would result in \$500 billion in economic growth, according to a study by Criterion Economics.

Broadband is also important to individuals and families. However, as we mentioned in our earlier comments, a mere 32% of low-income families with children have broadband at home. Many Latino families are left out. In addition, while many families may have access to broadband, they have yet to understand its benefits. The FCC’s broadband plan should also focus on utilizing public-private partnerships to bring broadband to under-served communities in community centers, libraries, and schools. As members of the community learn about computers and the Internet at these institutions, they will be more inclined to bring broadband into their homes. Then, these Americans will be able to experience the benefits of job searching, job training, telemedicine, distance learning, and telecommuting at home.

In reviewing other comments, we learned that other groups prioritized different issues. However, calls for speed requirements and openness only detract from the critical objective of 100% broadband deployment and adoption by assuming that all Americans are already served by the latest technology. They are not. Especially not Latino working families. It is essential that all Americans have access to broadband before we focus on other, loftier goals.

It has also come to our attention that others in the previous comment period took the opportunity to advocate for re-regulation in the high capacity services market.



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However, we agree with the Communications Workers of America (CWA) that lower price caps would have a detrimental impact on union jobs and broadband investment. If the Commission chooses to re-regulate, we fear these actions will stifle broadband investment, as competing carriers will have little incentive to build their own networks and invest in new technologies if they can obtain these services at artificially low rates. Less investment would lead to fewer jobs and lower wages in the telecom sector overall, as well as detract from the Obama Administration’s stated goal of more broadband growth.

LCLAA urges the Commission to consider the importance of broadband technology on working families, and the American economy. In order to experience the benefits that come from a broadband connection, all Americans must have the opportunity to bring broadband home.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gabriela D Lemus  
Executive Director,  
Labor Council for Latino American Advancement

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