

16 March 2010

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The IEEE-USA commends the U.S. Federal Communications Commission for introducing the National Broadband Plan (NBP). Creating a modern communications infrastructure and set of services for the Nation is vitally important. The FCC's comprehensive due diligence in defining the critical needs of the U.S. broadband infrastructure is a monumental task and we applaud your efforts. Furthermore, we offer our support for the NBP agenda.

Several points of focus and innovation are worth noting:

- 1) Ensuring affordable broadband Internet access for all Americans is vital. Providing state-of-the-art communication capabilities for rural citizens, small businesses and educational institutions and promoting digital literacy are equally critical goals.
- 2) The NBP proposes using commodity infrastructure components and a combination of a separate, secure, and hardened public safety network and the public wireless network to create a resilient, highly available, and cost-effective communications infrastructure for the USA's current and future public safety needs. This should reduce costs for state and local public safety budgets, and ensure a framework for interoperable and interconnected communications between different local, state, and federal public safety users.
- 3) Integrating mission-critical broadband into the smart grid and expanding access to energy information will reduce our energy consumption and improve our environmental impact.
- 4) Creating incentives for broader health IT adoption and innovation will help manage our rising healthcare costs, foster new business opportunities and improve healthcare for all Americans.
- 5) Transforming government services, increasing transparency, and expanding civic engagement should reduce government costs and help all Americans.
- 6) Opening up significant spectrum will be a key enabler for the exponentially expanding mobile market and the resulting economic opportunities.

All of these initiatives, as well as other specific recommendations, will foster significant economic opportunities for many Americans, businesses, and communities.

The IEEE-USA also has a keen interest in several aspects of the NBP, and we would welcome the opportunity to work with the FCC and the new Technical Advisory Committee in these areas as well as other relevant aspects of the NBP:

- Clarifying the transition from the legacy circuit-switched voice network infrastructure to IP-based networks and the resulting value and benefits.
- Although most of the technologies described by the NBP already exist, implementation details need to be worked out between the FCC, industry, and standards bodies.

Broadband is truly a transformational opportunity for the country. We applaud the FCC in developing the NBP and look forward to working with you in bringing this plan to fruition.

IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of more than 210,000 engineers, scientists and allied professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. IEEE-USA is part of the IEEE, the world's largest technical professional society with 375,000 members in 160 countries. For more information, please contact Deborah Rudolph at (202) 530-8332 or at d.rudolph@ieee.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Evelyn H. Hirt".

Evelyn H. Hirt
IEEE-USA President

EHH/DR:bc