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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 24, 2014

No. 14-030

Statewide Broadband Task Force Submits Report to Commissioner

The Statewide Broadband Task Force released its final plan and recommendations for deploying high speed broadband across the state. The report outlines key findings and offers recommendations to reach the goal of providing every Alaska household access to 100 megabits per second (Mbps) of broadband speed by 2020. The report can be viewed at www.akbroadbandtaskforce.com.

"Improving Alaska's broadband infrastructure will help Alaskans be more globally competitive in education, commerce, public safety, and healthcare," said Alaska Department of Commerce commissioner Susan Bell. "I appreciate the countless hours the task force spent over the last three years."

Since the draft was released for public comment in August of 2013, the Task Force continued to refine the report, holding a legislative hearing in April and a summit in July. "The baseline data and creative solutions outlined in the report are a result of innumerable meetings, public forums, academic and business research," said Bill Popp, chairman of the Statewide Broadband Task Force and President and CEO of Anchorage Economic Development Corp. "The focus of the Task Force was to create a document that would be useful to policy makers—I think we achieved that."

After Congress passed the Broadband Data Improvement Act in October 2008, a grant program was established and funded in 2009 by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to facilitate broadband planning in every state. Alaska received \$6.3 million for its broadband planning efforts including funds to establish a task force to oversee the planning effort, map Alaska's current broadband middle- and last-mile infrastructure, and to establish speeds and adoption rates. The 22 member task force first convened in March 2011 and was comprised of user groups, educators, anchor institutions, regulators, and communication providers.

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