

## Congresswoman Eshoo Encourages Local Businesses to Apply for Broadband Funds

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

Washington, D.C. - Congresswoman Anna Eshoo (D-Palo Alto) today encouraged local businesses and governments to apply for grants and loans aimed at bringing broadband to Americans lacking access to this critical infrastructure. The White House announced this week that \$4 billion of the \$7.2 billion provided in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for broadband programs will be available during the first-round application period.

Eshoo helped draft this part of the Stimulus package and pushed hard for grants and loans that would spur funding for the next generation of high speed internet services.

“The resources are now available to help underserved areas and to stimulate the economy,” Eshoo explained. “These programs work well when the best companies apply and many of these potential participants are right here in our district.”

The Commerce Department’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utilities Service (RUS) will oversee the application process and coordinate efforts to assist and select potential awardees. States, nonprofits and municipalities may qualify for money under the State Broadband Data and Development Program. Commercial businesses and other entities may apply for funds under the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP) or the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP).

Eshoo noted that the application process will be highly competitive and only those companies with “shovel-ready” programs should apply during the first round of the programs. Companies still developing programs and strategies will have more opportunities for participation during subsequent application rounds, she added.

Local governments and non-profit organizations also are expected to face stiff competition for available funds. Potential applicants will find information online at <http://www.broadbandusa.gov>. The application process begins on July 14, 2009 and ends one month later on August 14, 2009.

NTIA and RUS will conduct an “applicant workshop” on Friday, July 24, 2009, at the Omni Los Angeles Hotel at 251 S. Olive St. in Los Angeles. Government officials will provide workshops in nine cities in other parts of the nation prior to the first round application deadline.

“My staff is ready to assist local businesses with concerns about the program,” Eshoo said. “We want to have as much local participation as possible. Given our region’s reputation for technological innovation, I

believe our local businesses and governments will qualify for some of these grants and loans.&rdquo;

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