

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**Unleashing the Educational Power of Broadband Symposium**

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice advises interested persons that the Federal Communications Commission is holding a symposium exploring the educational power of broadband. A news release announcing the event was released on September 8, 2004 and an expanded release with an agenda was released on September 29, 2004, both of which were posted on the Commission's website.

DATES: Wednesday, October 6, 2004, 9 a.m., to 4 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons may join the meeting at the Federal Communications Commission, Commission Meeting Room, Room TW-A402 and TW-A442, 445 12th St. SW., Washington, DC 20554.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah Whitesell, 202-418-1941, Sarah.Whitesell@fcc.gov. Press Contact, Meribeth McCarrick, (202) 418-0654, Meribeth.McCarrick@fcc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is to explore ways to use broadband to facilitate learning in schools, libraries and the home. Among the presenters will be participants in the Schools and Libraries Universal Service program, also called "e-rate," which was established as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to provide affordable telecommunications services for all eligible schools and libraries, especially those in rural and economically disadvantaged areas. Speakers will also include teachers and librarians with first-hand experience using digital resources and assessing their impact on learning. The Federal Communications Commission will attempt to accommodate as many people as possible. However, admittance will be limited to the seating available. A live RealAudio feed will be available over the Internet; information on how to tune in can be found at the Commission's Web site <http://www.fcc.gov>.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene H. Dortch,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 04-22475 Filed 10-4-04; 8:45 am]

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[GN Docket No. 04-54; FCC 04-208]

Availability of Advanced Telecommunications Capability in the United States

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice; report to congress.

SUMMARY: This Report concludes the Commission's fourth inquiry under section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This Report finds that the overall goal of section 706 is being met, and that advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed on a reasonable and timely basis to all Americans.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Regina Brown, Wireline Competition Bureau, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, (202) 418-7400, TTY (202) 418-0484.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a summary of the Commission's *Fourth Report to Congress* in GN Docket No. 04-54 released on September 9, 2004. The full text of this document is available for public inspection during regular business hours in the FCC Reference Center, Room CY-A257, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554.

I. Introduction

1. Section 706 of the 1996 Telecommunications Act directs both the Commission and the states to encourage deployment of advanced telecommunications capability to all Americans on a reasonable and timely basis. In conjunction with this objective, Congress directed the Commission to conduct regular inquiries concerning whether advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed to all Americans on a reasonable and timely basis and, based on our findings, to take action to accelerate deployment, if necessary.

2. This *Fourth Report to Congress* (Fourth Report) concludes the Commission's fourth inquiry into the availability of advanced telecommunications capability in the United States. Like the previous three reports, this *Fourth Report* finds that the overall goal of section 706 is being met, and that advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed on a reasonable and timely basis to all Americans.

3. In the *Fourth Report*, we use the terms "advanced telecommunications capability" and "advanced services" to

mean services and facilities with an upstream (customer-to-provider) and downstream (provider-to-customer) transmission speed of 200 kbps or greater. Such facilities and services are referred to as "broadband" throughout this report, and, as the report details, they include both wireline (telephone company and cable) as well as a growing list of wireless facilities, both licensed and unlicensed. This *Fourth Report* focuses on services and facilities that provide 200 kbps upstream and downstream transmission speeds. In contrast, we use the term "high-speed" to describe services with more than 200 kbps capability in at least one direction.

4. Our existing definitions are not static. The success of first-generation broadband—at speeds of approximately 200 kbps—has prompted demand for ever-faster broadband networks and connections, and today most broadband providers are offering service well in excess of the minimum 200 kbps speed. The Commission currently has under consideration rule changes that will enable us to gather more information about these "next-generation" broadband networks and services for purposes of future reports.

5. This *Fourth Report* documents the significant development of new Internet-based services, and new access technologies that has taken place since the issuance of our last report in 2002. The best-known of these new Internet-based services is the commercial deployment of voice communications over the Internet Protocol network. The remarkable growth in Internet access is highlighted by the expansion of Wi-Fi Internet access and the explosive growth of both commercial and noncommercial hotspots. Wi-Fi joins an increasingly lengthy list of other wired and wireless methods of accessing the Internet, a list that also includes WiMax, personal area networks, satellite technologies, fiber-to-the-home, and broadband over power lines, in addition to more familiar cable modem and digital subscriber line (DSL) services.

6. The *Fourth Report* also documents that subscribership to these networks and services has increased significantly since the issuance of our last report. Specifically, subscribership to high-speed lines almost tripled from 9.6 million in June 2001 to 28.2 million in December 2003, and subscribership to advanced services more than tripled in this same period, from 5.9 million lines to 20.3 million lines. In addition, the number of residential and small business subscribers to high-speed services has more than tripled during the same period, from 7.8 million lines

in June 2001 to 26 million lines in December 2003.

7. Further, the *Fourth Report* documents the continuation of a positive trend that first emerged in our last report: namely, the increasing availability of advanced telecommunications capability to certain groups of consumers—those in rural areas, those with low incomes, and those with disabilities—who stand in particular need of advanced services. Consumers in these groups are of special concern to the Commission in that they are the doubly vulnerable: that is, although they are most in need of access to advanced telecommunications capability to overcome economic, educational, and other limitations, they are also the most likely to lack access precisely because of these limitations. The *Fourth Report* demonstrates that we are making substantial progress in closing the gaps in access that these groups traditionally have experienced.

8. Broadband-based Internet services have also become a critical communications tool for the deaf and hard-of-hearing, through the use of Internet Protocol Relay (IP Relay) and Video Relay Service (VRS), two forms of telecommunications relay services (TRS) that rely on the Internet. This report shows that there has been more than a 640 percent increase in IP Relay usage and more than a 2,000 percent increase in VRS in the past two years.

9. In addition, more than 95 percent of public libraries and 92 percent of public school classrooms have Internet access. Use of broadband connections in schools with high minority enrollment increased from 81 percent to 95 percent between 2000 and 2002. During this same period, schools with the highest poverty concentration using broadband connections to access the Internet increased from 75 percent to 95 percent.

Federal Communications Commission.

Marlene H. Dortch,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 04-22369 Filed 10-4-04; 8:45 am]

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FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collections; Comment Request

AGENCY: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

ACTION: Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The FDIC, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork

and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35). Currently, the FDIC is soliciting comments concerning the following collections of information titled: (1) Interagency Charter and Federal Deposit Insurance Application, and (2) Notice of Branch Closure.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before December 6, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties are invited to submit written comments to Steven F. Hanft (202-898-3907), Paperwork Clearance Officer, Room MB-3064, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 550 17th Street NW., Washington, DC 20429. All comments should refer to the OMB control number. Comments may be hand-delivered to the guard station at the rear of the 17th Street Building (located on F Street), on business days between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. [FAX number (202) 898-3838].

A copy of the comments may also be submitted to the OMB desk officer for the FDIC: Mark Menchik, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven F. Hanft, at the address identified above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Proposal to renew the following currently approved collections of information:

1. *Title:* Interagency Charter and Federal Deposit Insurance Application.
OMB Number: 3064-0001.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.
Affected Public: Banks or savings associations wishing to become FDIC-insured depository institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 200.

Estimated Time per Response: 125 hours.

Total Annual Burden: 25,000 hours.
General Description of Collection: The Interagency Charter and Federal Deposit Insurance Application is used by the FDIC as a deposit insurance application, and by the OCC and OTS as a charter application. Applications for deposit insurance must provide sufficient information to permit the FDIC to consider certain factors which are listed in Section 6 of the FDI Act. These factors include: the financial history and condition of the depository institution, the adequacy of its capital structure, its future earnings prospects, the general character and fitness of its

management, the risk it presents to the relevant insurance fund, the convenience and needs of the community to be served, and the consistency of its corporate powers. All depository institutions seeking insurance must follow the same procedures.

2. *Title:* Notice of Branch Closure.

OMB Number: 3064-0109.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Affected Public: Insured depository institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,364.

Estimated Time per Response: 2.4 hours.

Total Annual Burden: 3,028 hours.

General Description of Collection: An institution proposing to close a branch must notify its primary regulator no later than 90 days prior to the closing. Each FDIC-insured institution must adopt policies for branch closings. This collection covers the requirements for notice, and for policy adoption.

Request for Comment

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether these two collections of information are necessary for the proper performance of the FDIC's functions, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the estimates of the burden of the information collections, including the validity of the methodologies and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the information collections on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

At the end of the comment period, the comments and recommendations received will be analyzed to determine the extent to which the collections should be modified prior to submission to OMB for review and approval. Comments submitted in response to this notice also will be summarized or included in the FDIC's requests to OMB for renewal of these collections. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Dated at Washington, DC, this 30th day of September 2004.

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Robert E. Feldman,
Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 04-22367 Filed 10-4-04; 8:45 am]

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