BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS

SOME CONTEXT...

- "Broadband service may allow rural areas to compete for a range of service jobs, from call centers to software development. And even in non-service industries, internet tools can help businesses connect more efficiently with customers and suppliers" ("Strengthening the Rural Economy", 2010)
- However, a "digital divide" still exists between urban and rural areas
  - As of April 2009, home broadband adoption stood at 63% of all adult Americans, up from 55% in May 2008
  - However, adults living in rural America only grew from 38% in 2008 to 46% in 2009, approximately 20 percentage points behind the rest of America (Horrigan, 2009)
- In addition, a majority of home broadband users see high-speed internet as "very important" to at least one aspect of their lives and community, such as communicating with government officials or gathering and sharing information about the community (Horrigan, 2009)
- Rick Boucher, chairman of House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, said stimulus money excludes much of eastern US and Appalachia, since towns are technically close to urban areas and thus not eligible for money, but mountains prevent them from gaining access (Gardner, 2009)

Sources: Gardner, W. David. "Lawmaker: Broadband Funds Exclude Appalachia." Information Week Government, 11 Sept 2009. Web. 19 May 2010; Horrigan, John B. "Home Broadband Adoption 2009." Pew Research Center Publications, June 2009. Web. 29 June 2010; "Strengthening the Rural Economy." Executive Office of the President - Council of Economic Advisors, April 2010. PDF File.

FROM THE FIELD...

Challenges

Opportunities