



April 14, 2005

Dear Senator,

The AeA and TechNet Texas, leading trade organizations representing the high-tech industry, oppose **any effort to erect barriers to municipal broadband networks.**

Municipal broadband networks are an attractive partnership option for the private sector, and play an important role in the next wave of technology innovations. Recognizing broadband's potential, President Bush has set an ambitious goal for universal and affordable broadband access in every part of the U.S. by 2007.

Rather than closing off or limiting broadband options in Texas, policymakers should be trying to unleash every possible broadband option. Municipal broadband is a great opportunity, not just for citizens, but also for the willing and voluntary private sector partners in these investments. We don't have to look far to see it--communities throughout Texas -- like Corpus Christi, Granbury, Linden, Elgin, Lockhart, Belton, Temple, and Gunbarrel -- have deployed municipal networks to provide citizen access that supports economic development and improves quality of life.

Today, we are a long way from achieving the President's goal. In fact, as a nation, America has slipped to 13th place among the leading countries in the world in broadband penetration. **More than 5 million Texas households – roughly three out of every four households – don't have broadband access.** Our citizens deserve better.

This isn't the time to be erecting new barriers to broadband when we have communities throughout the state that are ready, willing and able to extend the reach of the Internet through advanced broadband networks.

You have the opportunity to set a course that can help spread a new communications revolution across Texas, and help give the private sector additional investment choices, by enabling every possible broadband option. **We urge you to reject any proposal that would in any way limit municipal deployment options.** We look forward to working with you to achieve this bright future.

Sincerely,

Chrissy Camacho
AeA Texas Council

Julie Paul
TechNet Texas