

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IN PROVIDING BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS
SERVICES TO CITIZENS**

WHEREAS, the United States ranks behind 15 other industrialized countries in the percentage of residents using broadband Internet connections; and

WHEREAS, the availability of broadband service is critical to attracting, growing, and retaining businesses in the highly competitive global marketplace; and

WHEREAS, broadband service is proving valuable to the economic transitioning and growth of distressed urban and rural communities; and

WHEREAS, broadband service to access information and resources is pivotal to eliminating the digital divide and promoting the economic and personal self-sufficiency of low-income individuals; and

WHEREAS, local governments are seeking to meet the needs of their communities for broadband service where such service is unavailable, inadequate, or prohibitively expensive; and

WHEREAS, local governments can play an important role in achieving President Bush's goal of universal broadband deployment by 2007; and

WHEREAS, local governments are beginning to establish wireless municipal broadband networks for underserved residents, either directly or in partnership with others; and

WHEREAS, for example, there has been a ten-fold increase in the number of public power companies offering broadband service over the past decade; and

WHEREAS, the permissibility of and conditions under which local governments can offer broadband service will be considered in the upcoming rewrite of the Telecommunications Act of 1996,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED The United States Conference of Mayors urges the Congress to ensure the continued ability of local governments to offer broadband Internet service access to citizens, and endorses S. 1294, the Community Broadband Act, and

Title IV of H.R. 5252, the Communications Opportunity, Promotion and Enhancement Act.