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Contact: Bridget Scrimenti
(617) 610-4138

CONTINUING PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION'S
COMMITMENT TO EXPANDING BROADBAND ACCESS IN
WESTERN MA, MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND
INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT WITH
SPRINGFIELD TO ADVANCE THE **MASSBROADBAND 123**
NETWORK

*Connection to Springfield's major Internet access point is a critical step in the operation of the **MassBroadband 123** network; the MBI will provide direct fiber connections to over 150 local education, medical, public safety institutions.*

Springfield, MA (March 21, 2011) – In keeping with the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to expanding broadband access in western Massachusetts, the MBI today announced an important agreement with the City of Springfield to advance the **MassBroadband 123** network and provide broadband infrastructure connections for more than 150 schools, libraries, hospitals and public safety entities in Springfield. In addition, the MBI will utilize the city's existing infrastructure to connect the **MassBroadband 123** fiber-optic network to the major Internet connection point in Springfield. This is one of the critical components necessary to link the entire 1,338 mile network to the Internet and expand broadband services to communities in western and north central Massachusetts.

"Expanding broadband access has been at the forefront of our economic development agenda since day one," said Governor Deval Patrick. "Today's agreement with Springfield is the latest example of state, federal and local partnership working toward the goal of expanded access to high-speed Internet for communities across the Commonwealth."

"In partnership with the City of Springfield and the congressional delegation, we are increasing access and improving broadband infrastructure that will foster growth and economic development opportunities," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray. "Through **MassBroadband 123**, these improvements will support an array of services in the city as we work together to move this city and region forward."

"Bringing broadband to western and north central Massachusetts will reinvigorate our economy," said Congressman Richard Neal. "Considering the geography of our region, the opportunities for infrastructure and economic development are limitless. The MBI's fiber-optic network will connect our region's schools, libraries, hospitals and public safety entities, making the western part of the state an even more desirable place to live and work."

"I am very pleased to see *MassBroadband 123* moving forward with the cooperation of the City of Springfield. Getting access to broadband for residents across all of Massachusetts has been a goal I've worked toward for over a decade. Access to broadband in western and central Massachusetts will put our businesses in a better place to compete, give students better access to the resources they need to succeed and help our first responders communicate more effectively," said Congressman John Olver.

"The City of Springfield is pleased to work with the MBI to establish this important connection," said Mayor Domenic Sarno. "The MBI's broadband infrastructure investments will strengthen the city's core services and support long-term growth and economic development."

"Expanding broadband connectivity will enhance the economic vitality of Springfield and the region," said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Greg Bialecki. "This is part of Governor Patrick's plan to promote innovation throughout the state and adds to the administration's already strong investments in the region, including the Springfield Data Center and Holyoke Green High Performance Computing Center."

"The support of federal, state and local officials has been critical as we work to invest in the city's broadband infrastructure and reach Governor Patrick's goal of expanding broadband connectivity across Massachusetts," said MBI Director Judith Dumont. "Connecting to Springfield's major Internet access point is an important step toward reaching unserved and underserved communities in this region, which remain the MBI's top priority."

The *MassBroadband 123* network includes 55 miles of recently installed fiber-optic cable along I-91 from the Vermont to Connecticut borders, a critical north-south axis for the network. Today's agreement permits the MBI to connect the I-91 portion of the *MassBroadband 123* network to the the Internet Point of Presence located at One Federal Street in Springfield, which serves as a major access point to the Internet.

As part of the completed *MassBroadband 123* network, the MBI will be investing up to \$4 million in broadband infrastructure in Springfield to provide an open-access network through the city and direct fiber connections to more than 150 key institutions. In addition to Springfield, the *MassBroadband 123* Internet backbone network will extend broadband services to over 120 communities in western and north central Massachusetts and connect close to 1,400 community anchor institutions such as public safety entities, schools, libraries, medical facilities and town halls.

(MORE)

To expand high-speed Internet access in the region, the MBI will attach fiber-optic cable to over 30,000 existing utility poles in the project's service area. The MBI recently signed an agreement with Axia NGNetworks USA to serve as the network operator for the *MassBroadband 123* network. Axia will provide wholesale services on the network to broadband service providers and maintain and refresh the fiber-optic network to ensure its operability and efficiency. The *MassBroadband 123* network will be open access to allow any broadband provider to connect and offer its services, which will increase competition and affordability of options available to consumers.

The MBI is a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC), a public economic development agency chartered by the Commonwealth to spur innovation across Massachusetts. MTC will own the *MassBroadband 123* network and is responsible for its design and construction, which is expected to be completed by summer 2013.

MassBroadband 123 is a critical component of Governor Deval Patrick's initiative to expand broadband connectivity across the Massachusetts. The MBI was awarded \$45.4 million in federal stimulus funding to develop the *MassBroadband 123* network. The Commonwealth is providing \$26.2 million in matching funds, bringing the total public investment in the project to \$71.6 million.

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About the MBI

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) is working to extend affordable high-speed Internet access to all homes, businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices and other public places across the Commonwealth. Governor Patrick created the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, when he signed the Broadband Act into law in August 2008. The Act gives the MBI the authority to invest up to \$40 million of state bond funds in necessary and long-lived infrastructure assets, such as conduits, fiber-optic cable and wireless towers. For more information on the MBI, please visit www.massbroadband.org.