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Ohio Governor Strickland & the U.S. Chamber Call for Sound Broadband Policy

Event Highlighted Economic Impact for Ohio

COLUMBUS, OHIO—The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the national non-profit Connected Nation, Inc. kicked off the *Connect!* campaign today in Columbus to promote broadband connectivity, and its benefits to education, healthcare, agriculture, business and the U.S. economy. This was the first stop on a national tour to promote the importance and benefits of broadband and related technologies.

“We are bringing together lawmakers, businesses, consumers, and experts in order to raise awareness on broadband use and discuss the importance of sound broadband policies and programs for the economic interests of the United States,” said William L. Kovacs, Vice President of Environment, Technology, and Regulatory Affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. “This dialogue will emphasize that the ability to engage in e-commerce is critical for U.S. businesses. E-commerce allows all businesses, no matter how small or where they are located, to sell to customers everywhere.”

The event featured a keynote speech by Governor Ted Strickland (D-OH) and addressed the ability of broadband to impact everything from economic development and U.S. global competitiveness to telemedicine and education. Panelists from the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, Robert A. Taft Information Technology School, and other community organizations highlighted the impact of broadband connectivity on Ohio.

“With a modest increase in broadband adoption, Ohio could realize a total direct economic impact of \$5.6 billion annually including \$3.6 billion in new wages from the 96,000 jobs created through broadband growth,” continued Kovacs. “To realize these results, public-private partnerships and events like these regional dialogues are necessary to foster the deployment of broadband to all communities while increasing user demand through state and local grassroots awareness and adoption campaigns.”

For more information on the *Connect!* tour, please visit: www.connectednation.org or www.uschamber.com/telecom.

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