

## Mr. Chairman What's In Your Zip Code?

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By Matt Brunk

According to one of the FCC's chairmen - "the idea that the U.S. lags in Internet access is based on shoddy statistics, and may lead us to adopt innovation-killing policies." ([WSJ, July 24, 2007](#))



So Chairman McDowell- in what zip code do you reside? The **FCC publishes similar statistics** to show that anyone within the zip code 21770 has high speed Internet access. When pigs fly!

Within any zip code there's a **huge disparity** in who has "high speed" Internet access along with what the FCC defines as "high speed" or "broadband." The Chairman does make one good point in his long history lesson in the WSJ. I agree it's hard to compare our nation against most other nations because they don't have the geographical layout that we do. This is challenging, so what? We are the United States.

However, his argument seems to imply 'don't push me or other policy makers because we can ax innovation with these ideas that the U.S. lags.' That logic explains why in part the **U.S. Lags in Delivery of High Speed Internet**. He, along with many others, quickly point out what "will be spent" which, by any measure, doesn't solve today's problems. Instead, his argument masks the true state that the U.S. does lag in getting high speed internet to every American business, homeowner, farm or any other residence by using projections of what private enterprise will spend to deliver various internet services.

President Eisenhower influenced the development of today's Interstate Highway system by the **1956 National Interstate and Defense Highways Act**. He saw the bigger picture and knew from early experiences the challenges the U.S. faced moving troops and armament across the nation. The automobile manufacturers had their interests too, albeit they weren't for the benefit of national interests.

The national **Rural Electrification Act of 1936** was one of the most important Acts of its time. Today, we need the same for internet access and it must be inclusive of other national policies to serve the good of the nation not the few. We also **lack updated laws regulating telecommunications** and governing an asset that legislature has failed to do.

U.S. policy is what lags and lacks in understanding, seeing the bigger picture and feeling the sense of urgency. Instead, legislators and policy makers tend to view and use telecom as a political football, all for the sake of bearing tax and auction revenues. So Mr. Chairman and friends, do tell- what is the U.S. policy on using a national network to improve lives, reduce pollution and energy consumption while creating positive U.S. workflow and enhance national security? Can you do this without being punitive to the industry and to its beneficiaries as in the past? When will your definitions of "high speed" and "broadband" catch up to the rest of the worlds' standards?

Even bigger is the challenge is to lay a national infrastructure that exceeds any expectations and brings about positive change. Get off the chump-change citations that I'm getting 2 or 5 Mbps at home- big deal! Policy making must change and the only way this will change is when chairmen and regulators like Mr. McDowell understand and grasp what we can and should do with a national telecommunications infrastructure.

From energy, environment, employment and any other societal influence; bandwidth isn't just for U-tube. Bandwidth can empower anyone to work and live differently. Our energy, security, transportation and other policies must be inclusive of, not exclusive of the national telecommunications network. For those making policy, they need to understand above and beyond the ordinary monkey politics of tax and spend. We all paid for the **Spanish-American War** many times over.

The environment stands to benefit greatly and our future as a nation needs the same empowerment of an information highway that can handle not yesterday's need of 2 or 5 Mbps to the home, but tomorrow's needs as well. Our nation stands to benefit as do the millions of Americans and businesses that must compete in a global workforce that doesn't have our interests at stake.

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