

STATE: South Carolina

Date of Report: February 2008

Nature of report (preliminary, final, advisory, executive/legislative):

Final with minority report to the General Assembly

Key recommendations:

- Use a consultant to form a nonprofit entity that will utilize a group such as ConnectNation to accurately map and record unserved areas, and determine whether the state should:
 - Use incentives to accelerate deployment of services;
 - Whether the focus should be on increasing supply or demand or both;
 - Whether access by residential or business consumers should be subsidized.
- Higher educational holders of spectrum be authorized to proceed with RFPs to lease excess.
- Options should be considered for the State to use the existing K12 network as a platform for commercial wireless broadband to communities.

Minority Report:

- Voiced concern that the recommendation did little but hire another consultant to do another study.
- Listed serious reservations that the General Assembly would act in time to safeguard the ETV K12 spectrum by meeting FCC deadlines, while agreeing with the higher ed network recommendation.
- Signed by two House Representatives.

Recommended Appropriations: None

Web link to agency or task force:

<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/citizensinterestpage/BroadbandTechnology&CommunicationStudyComm/broadband.html/>

Statement of Values: The General Assembly adopted two goals: (1) all South Carolinians should have affordable access to broadband products and services as quickly as possible; and (2) the policies of the State should promote technological neutrality, competition, investment and innovation so that broadband service providers have sufficient incentive to develop and offer these services.

Where we've been: SC had excess capacity in 2.5 GHz spectrum licenses after the required switch to digital systems which prompted the creation of this advisory group.

Where we are today: No information included other than the descriptions of the spectrum licenses and FCC deadlines. Minority report noted that SC is already ahead of Kentucky in its criticism of hiring the consultant and ConnectNation.

Where we want to be: Provide all South Carolinians regardless of their location with affordable access to broadband products and services as quickly as possible.

How are we going to get there?

- Hire a consultant.
- Lease excess spectrum.

Broadband functionality (tiers of service) – None noted