



**Amy Klobuchar**

U.S. Senator from Minnesota

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## **Klobuchar Announces Investments in High Speed Internet**

*Senate Economic Recovery Package moves forward with Klobuchar priorities to create jobs*

Washington, D.C. – Today U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar announced that key investments in high speed internet that she pushed for were included by the Senate Appropriations Committee in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The legislation includes nearly \$9 billion to strengthen the nation’s high speed internet infrastructure and will help deliver the technologies that can create new jobs and opportunities in rural America.

**“In these tough economic times, broadband deployment will create jobs – not only the direct creation of jobs in the tech sector, but also the creation of even more indirect employment opportunities by increasing access to broadband.”** said Klobuchar. **“After visiting rural communities in Minnesota to discuss economic conditions during the last two months, I heard first-hand from people about the importance of making sure they have access to fast and affordable high speed internet.”**

Klobuchar has aggressively pushed to have high speed internet investment included in the economic recovery package to help jumpstart the economy and create new jobs. Earlier this month Klobuchar argued that these investments were critical and would help struggling communities, especially those in rural areas, by expanding educational, health care and employment opportunities.

**“The issue in Minnesota is not necessarily the availability of Internet access, but service that is too slow or too expensive for individuals and small businesses to be able to afford,”** said Klobuchar.

Klobuchar recently sent a letter to President-elect Obama urging him to include investments in broadband in the economic recovery plan that the Senate is considering.

Experts have noted that the United States is falling behind other nations in Internet access. According to the International Telecommunications Union, the U.S. ranks 24<sup>th</sup> in the world in broadband penetration.

In the U.S., rural access and usage is significantly lower than the national average. Broadband service is becoming increasingly important for job creation and economic development. A recent study by the Brookings Institution estimates that every one percentage point increase in broadband penetration per year would lead to the creation of nearly 300,000 new jobs.

Klobuchar serves on the Senate Commerce Committee, which has authority over telecommunications issues. She cosponsored the Broadband Data Improvement Act (S. 1492), which was signed into law in October. The legislation will improve the quality of the data collected by the federal government on broadband services. It also authorizes a grant program for states to create statewide broadband initiatives.