For Immediate Release
January 31, 2013

NEW STUDY:  BROADBAND INVESTMENT CREATED MORE THAN 13,000 JOBS IN ILLINOIS IN 2010 & 2011 & HAS CREATED NEARLY 20,000 MOBILE APP ECONOMY JOBS

New Coalition Advocates for Modern Communications Policies to Attract More Private Broadband Investment that Creates More Illinois Jobs

“The message is clear: the more broadband investment in Illinois, the more jobs created in Illinois.”

SPRINGFIELD, IL — A study released today shows broadband investment in the state in 2010 and 2011 created 13,125 jobs in Illinois and, in 2012, the state had nearly 20,000 “mobile app economy” jobs. Today a new coalition — the Illinois Partnership for the New Economy & Jobs — is forming to advocate for Illinois to adopt a modern communications policy that will attract even more private broadband investment to create more jobs and spur the Illinois economy.

“This new study makes it clear that broadband investment is creating jobs in Illinois. Broadband is the modern economic infrastructure that is fueling today’s economy and putting people to work. Broadband investment in Illinois creates jobs in all areas of the economy, including health care, education, manufacturing, banking, retail, transportation and public safety,” said David Vite, President & CEO of the Illinois Retail Merchants Association and the Chair of the Illinois Partnership for the New Economy & Jobs (IP: New Economy & Jobs). “As the state’s communications law expires this year, Illinois has an opportunity to adopt a modern communications policy that will attract more private investment in broadband and create more jobs.”
Study: The study, released by the coalition today, shows that Illinois broadband investment in 2010 and 2011 created 13,125 Illinois jobs. In addition, mobile broadband investment helped create a new industry — the “Mobile App Economy” — that develops applications, or “apps,” for consumers to use on wireless devices. The study shows Illinois had 19,900 “Mobile App Economy” jobs in April 2012. The mobile app industry did not even exist before 2007.

“This new economic study shows that broadband investment in Illinois created 13,125 jobs in the state in 2010 and 2011. In addition, as of last April, the state had nearly 20,000 jobs in its “Mobile App Economy.” These are modern jobs that support creating applications — also known as “apps” — for mobile devices including smartphones and tablets,” said Jeff Mays, President, Illinois Business Roundtable. “The message is clear: the more broadband investment in Illinois, the more jobs created in Illinois.”

The study was performed by Navigant Economics’ Illinois-based economist Debra Aron and Washington DC-based economist Hal J. Singer. “Like the evolution in technologies, policy must evolve to remain relevant to market circumstance and to reflect the preferences of the modern consumer,” the study authors conclude. “Sound public policy must facilitate, rather than discourage, additional private investment in next-generation broadband infrastructure to meet the growing demand for mobile and wireline broadband services, and government regulation ill-serves consumers, workers, and businesses if it is in conflict with these powerful trends.”

The “IP: New Economy & Jobs” coalition is comprised of job creation advocates and the state’s leading taxpayer advocacy organization. Coalition members include:

- Illinois Retail Merchants Association
- Illinois Manufacturers’ Association
- Illinois Chamber of Commerce
- Taxpayers’ Federation of Illinois
- Women’s Business Development Center
- Illinois Business Roundtable
- Illinois Black Chamber of Commerce
- Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
- Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
- Illinois Telecommunications’ Association
- AT&T Illinois
“This coalition, the Illinois Partnership for the New Economy and Jobs, will work for modern policies that will attract private investment in broadband to fuel economic growth and create jobs in the new economy. To create more jobs in Illinois, we need strong wired and wireless broadband networks. That is why the Illinois Chamber is supporting the adoption of a modern telecom policy,” said Doug Whitley, President & CEO of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, a coalition member.

“Illinois manufacturers are using cutting edge communications technologies to design, create and deliver their products for customers across the state and around the world. Our members rely on modern communications infrastructure to be productive and profitable. Broadband investment is creating jobs in manufacturing. That’s why the IMA is supporting communications modernization in 2013,” said Greg Baise, President & CEO of the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association.

“By modernizing the state’s expiring communications laws, Illinois can attract more private sector investment in broadband to create more jobs. This is a job creation initiative that doesn’t cost taxpayer money. It is a policy change to advance the Illinois’ economy,” said Carol Portman, President, Taxpayers’ Federation of Illinois.

"Women entrepreneurs are building new businesses and creating jobs with the power of modern broadband networks. The technology simply makes it easier to bring an idea, product or service into the global marketplace. That's why broadband is helping launch more women-owned businesses. That's why the Women's Business Development Center supports a more modern communications law for Illinois," said Hedy Ratner, Co-Founder & Co-President, Women’s Business Development Center.

"Private sector broadband investment brings economic opportunities to entrepreneurs from all walks of life. If an entrepreneur can dream it, broadband will help him or her achieve it. The Illinois Black Chamber of Commerce stands for improving economic opportunities in this state. That’s why we are strongly supporting Communications Modernization in 2013,” said Larry Ivory, President & CEO, Illinois Black Chamber of Commerce.

"In our community, broadband is a great equalizer for business and economic opportunities that create jobs. This modern economic infrastructure allows small Illinois companies to compete with larger companies throughout the world. Broadband investment is vital to support our members and their businesses," said Omar Duque, President & CEO, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.
“The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce works to promote policies to spur innovation, entrepreneurship and job creation. In this global economy, a more modern Illinois communications policy will attract more private sector investment in wired and wireless broadband that is essential for modern businesses to compete and create jobs,” said Steward Sandstrom, Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce.

"To grow our regional economy, and to attract diverse businesses of all sizes, the members of the Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce recognize we must have access to modern economic infrastructure. We are working to modernize Illinois communications laws to attract more broadband investment to meet the growing demand and to create jobs in the South Suburbs,” said Dave Hinderliter, President & CEO, Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce.

“We live in a communications and Internet economy that is advancing every day. In 2013, Illinois has a great opportunity to support modern communications laws to attract more private investment in broadband networks, to fuel the economy and create more jobs,” said Paul La Schiazza, President, AT&T Illinois.

“Broadband changed the economy and changed the world. In 2013, Illinois will set its communications policy for the future and the state can advance to a modern policy to fuel broadband investment and job creation for the years to come,” said Matt Johnson, President, Illinois Telecommunications Association.

###