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## DPS Seeks Consumer Input on Broadband Availability

### New York State Broadband Assessment Program Survey Gathers Additional Consumer Input

### State Seeks to Address Reach of Broadband Service That Remains a Challenge in Rural Areas

**ALBANY** — The New York State Department of Public Service (DPS) announced the addition of a toll-free consumer hotline and a mail-in paper option in addition to the on-line survey for the Department's Broadband Assessment Program Survey. The initiative, first announced by Governor Kathy Hochul late last year, will be New York's first-ever in-depth statewide mapping study of broadband to identify the availability, reliability, and cost of high-speed broadband services across the State.

"High-speed internet is essential to access basic services and information that we use in our daily lives," **said DPS CEO Rory M. Christian.** "With this groundbreaking study, we will begin the process to ensure that every part of the State — regardless of geographical and economic factors — can access high-speed broadband."

While DPS is encouraged by the number of residents who have already completed this important survey, to ensure the accuracy of our findings, the agency urges more New Yorkers to take part in the consumer survey.

As called for in the 2021 Executive Budget, the Broadband Assessment Program, whose work will be updated annually, will release New York's first-ever, in-depth interactive broadband map in the second quarter of 2022 detailing the availability and reliability of high-speed broadband infrastructure statewide with an accompanying report.

Through field-verified research, and with the help of internet service providers, the interactive map will demonstrate not only those areas meeting the State's definition of served, but most importantly where the unserved and underserved broadband infrastructure areas remain across the State.

As part of this process, DPS will:

- Identify areas at a census block level that are served by a sole provider and assess any State regulatory and statutory barriers related to the delivery of comprehensive statewide access to high-speed internet;

- Review available technology to identify solutions that best support high-speed internet service in underserved or unserved areas, and make recommendations on ensuring deployment of such technology in underserved and unserved areas;
- Identify instances where local governments have notified DPS of alleged non-compliance with franchise agreements and instances of commission or department enforcement actions that have had a direct impact on internet access;
- Identify locations where insufficient access to high-speed internet and/or broadband service, and/or persistent digital divide, is causing negative social or economic impact on the community; and
- Produce and publish on its website, a detailed internet access map of the State, indicating access to internet service by address.

The DPS analysis will include download and upload speeds advertised and experienced; the consistency and reliability of download and upload speeds including latency; the types of internet service and technologies available including but not limited to dial-up, broadband, wireless, fiber, coaxial, or satellite; the number of internet service providers available, the price of internet service available; and any other factors the Commission may deem relevant.

DPS will publicly issue its report and recommendations by May 2022. The report will include the overall number of residences with access to high-speed internet, and it will identify which areas are served, unserved and underserved. It will also conduct a regional survey of internet service prices in comparison to county-level median income; and any other relevant consumer subscription statistics. The purpose of the study is to help determine what steps are needed to ensure that all of New York's residential and commercial consumers have access to the internet, as needed.

The broadband mapping survey and speed test can be found at:  
[www.empirestatebroadband.com](http://www.empirestatebroadband.com).

As part of this study, DPS will also hold at least two public hearings to solicit input from the public and other stakeholders, including internet service providers, telecommunications concerns, labor organizations, public safety organizations, healthcare, education, agricultural and other businesses or organizations. Hearing dates and locations to be announced in the coming weeks.

State residents unable to take the survey online due to lack of connectivity can contact the Department's toll-free hotline at 1-855-NYBBMAP (1-855-692-2627) to request that a paper version be sent to their homes with a return envelope and pre-paid postage. Residents are also encouraged to complete the on-line survey at [www.empirestatebroadband.com](http://www.empirestatebroadband.com) at home, on their cell phones, or complete the survey at local libraries with internet access.