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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

**GOVERNOR HOCHUL ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF MAPPING SURVEY TO EXAMINE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF BROADBAND ACROSS THE STATE**

***Public Hearings to be Held to Receive Input from Public and Other Stakeholders***

***State Seeks to Address Reach of Broadband Service That Remains a Challenge Nationwide***

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced the launch of a Broadband Mapping Consumer Survey to assist in 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. Correctly gauging the prevalence and reach of broadband service has been a challenge not just in New York, but nationally. The federal government is also engaged in a similar study, but the timeline for its completion remains unclear.

"High-speed internet is the great equalizer in today's world because it is essential in accessing basic services and information that we all need in our daily lives," **Governor Hochul said.** "With this groundbreaking study, we will help ensure that every part of the state - regardless of geographical and economic factors - has access to high-speed broadband."

As called for in the Executive Budget passed earlier this year, the state Public Service Commission will study the availability, reliability, and cost of high-speed internet and broadband services across the state. As part of this process, the Commission 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 the Commission 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 Commission's map 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.

Unlike previous federal maps, which have been sharply criticized for their lack of specificity and accuracy, New York's interactive map will focus on the status of broadband service at the address level. As part of the research, the Commission has sent letters to all providers in New York informing them that it has contracted with ECC Technologies, a New York State based company with expertise in technology and communications consulting, who will be seeking detailed information on their broadband service information, including service areas at address level, upload and download speeds, network infrastructure type(s), pricing, and other necessary data, to be used as the basis for the broadband map and report.

The Commission 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 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 groundbreaking study, the Commission will hold 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.

New York's comprehensive 2021 Connectivity Agenda builds on the state's nation-leading initiative in delivering equitable internet access for all New Yorkers. In 2015, the State undertook the largest and most ambitious broadband initiative in the nation, dedicating \$500 million to broaden internet access statewide. This investment, coupled

with regulatory reforms, expanded the reach of broadband so today 98 percent of New York households have access to high-speed broadband with download speeds of at least 100 Mbps. Furthermore, New York took critical steps to tackle the digital divide in schools by signing the 2014 Smart Schools Bond Act. This Act made \$2 billion available to school districts across the state for technology devices and classroom enhancements to improve school connectivity, making it possible for schools to weather today's challenges of remote learning.

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