



STATE OF ILLINOIS  
**OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

**PAT QUINN**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

The Honorable Daniel Inouye  
Chairman  
Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation  
254 Russell Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Stevens  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation  
560 Dirksen Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: S. 1492 – The Broadband Data Improvement Act**

July 3, 2008

Dear Chairman Inouye and Vice Chairman Stevens:

As Chairman of the Illinois Broadband Deployment Council (BDC), I am writing to express my support for *The Broadband Data Improvement Act*.

The Illinois BDC is comprised of consumers, leaders in the communications industry, in universities, in libraries and in local, county and state government. It aims to improve the cost, speed and availability of advanced network services in Illinois. My office serves as a clearinghouse for information, grants, loans, and other resources for anyone in the public, private or non-profit sectors interested in broadband technology.

Serious public attempts to speed deployment and adoption of high-speed network services have been frustrated by a lack of granular broadband data. A May 2006 U.S. Government Accountability Office report concluded that, while broadband is deployed extensively nationwide, it nonetheless remains difficult to assess the extent of deployment gaps. Multiple efforts to map broadband deployment in Illinois have been severely impaired by limited data on the cost, speed and availability of broadband services.

The improved federal data collection and mapping efforts that will result from passage of the Broadband Data Improvement Act will dramatically enhance these mapping projects. I specifically endorse the bill's matching grants to states to support state data collection efforts. The grants will help places like Illinois initiate meaningful data collection programs, and they will aid the National Telecommunications and Information Administration in their national mapping efforts.

However, to avoid wasting scarce resources, Congress should broaden the definition of "eligible entity" to include any single organization, *public* or non-profit, designated by a state. This language was included in the House version of The Broadband Data Improvement Act. Restricting federal matching grants to initiatives operated through a narrowly defined non-profit model needlessly limits state flexibility and could harm state-, university- or non-profit projects that do not conform to the current definition.

Improving broadband data collection and mapping will form a sound foundation from which policymakers and service providers can make informed decisions in pursuit of nationwide broadband availability.

I urge Congress to move quickly on this legislation to help states address gaps in broadband deployment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat Quinn".

Lt. Governor Pat Quinn