



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Senator Betty Little, Dr. Melodie Mayberry-Stewart Cohost Broadband Summit

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Broadband Summit Held in Lake Placid

Cohosted by New York State CIO and State Senator Betty Little

ALBANY, NY (05/25/2010)(readMedia)-- On Friday, May 21, 2010, Dr. Melodie Mayberry-Stewart, New York State Chief Information Officer and Director of the New York State Office for Technology and New York State Senator Betty Little co-hosted a Broadband Summit to talk about closing the North Country digital divide.

The goal of the program was to provide up-to-date information about existing broadband service, broadband construction projects underway, and future plans to develop broadband throughout the Adirondacks.

"Despite our record of commitment to universal broadband there are still many areas across New York State that are underserved and unserved, including many areas in the Adirondack region," said Governor David A. Paterson. "People are demanding broadband access where they live, work, and vacation. We must implement a robust broadband infrastructure if we want to continue to attract new businesses, citizens and tourist to the North Country."

"We have a very diverse State made up of urban, suburban and rural areas. I am pleased to work with Senator Little to close the digital divide in New York's North Country," said Dr. Mayberry-Stewart. "Access to broadband can transform how a

community does business, interacts with government, learns and is entertained. With broadband Internet connectivity, distance is no longer an obstacle to information and greater opportunities for its residents and businesses to prosper."

New York State Senator Betty Little said, "This was a great opportunity for our presenters to publicly discuss what they've done to develop broadband here in the Adirondacks and their plans for building out in the future. They all shared a lot of important information, and I am very appreciative of the time they made on Friday to bring us up-to-date. Dr. Melodie Mayberry-Stewart is a great advocate and I am pleased we could partner on this public event. I am confident progress will accelerate and more North Country residents, businesses and visitors will see the benefit of high-speed connectivity."

The Summit included presentations on the New York State Broadband Strategy, an overview of the National Broadband Plan and current federal funding opportunities for broadband expansion and development. Staff from the NYS Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination provided an overview on the current broadband availability in the North Country and Senate District 45.

William Pelgrin, Director of the New York State Office of Cyber Security and Critical Infrastructure Coordination, the state agency leading the state's broadband mapping efforts, said, "We're making considerable progress in identifying and aggregating data on broadband availability across the State. The cooperation from the private sector broadband community and other key partners has been tremendous and we look forward to continued collaboration as we move ahead with our broadband data collection and mapping activities."

Local presenters at the event included Akwesasne Broadband Project, CBN Connect, DANC, ION, Primelink, Westelcom, SLIC, Clarkson University, and Saranac Lake Chamber of Commerce to discuss "Google the Adirondacks." Speakers presented projects and plans they have underway to help close the digital divide in the North Country.

"It is very exciting to have CIO/OFT and Senator Little put focus on the State's broadband development efforts in the North Country. The Adirondack Park region, in particular, contains many communities that are unserved and underserved by wired and wireless high speed broadband. CBN Connect Inc.'s mission is to provide an open access network that private telecom service providers can use to extend

service to end users in these areas. This partnership will be key to making NY State's Universal Broadband Strategy successful in our rural region, ensuring residents have the infrastructure to compete in the global marketplace and place the State at the forefront of modern digital connectivity," said Howard Lowe, President, CBN Connect Inc. and a Co-Chair of the NYS Broadband Development and Deployment Council's Economic Development Technical Committee.

Clarkson University President Tony Collins said, "As the essential utility for the 21st century, broadband enables sustainable economic growth and job creation. New federal, state and local grants and partnerships with providers are bringing broadband to front porches throughout the region. Through Clarkson's Adirondack Initiative for Wired Work and the Forever Wired Conference, we are committed to promoting technology, education and services that encourage broadband adoption. Hand-in-hand with access to the new networks, these activities will advance telework, green tech commerce and entrepreneurship from home offices and small businesses with minimal impact on the natural environment."

"Thank you to Dr. Mayberry Stewart and Senator Little for their leadership in organizing this Summit," said St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Chief James W. Ransom. "We fully support a collaborative approach to bring broadband to the North Country."

"Broadband is the new highway. We need to make sure no one in Senator Little's territory is left off the interstate. We must get high speed Internet to everyone, no matter what medium. This can be accomplished through public/private partnerships," Trent Trahan, CEO, Primelink, Inc.

Three presenters at the Broadband Summit collectively received \$44 million in federal stimulus monies that will significantly impact broadband build out in the North Country. Federal stimulus grants will ensure broadband service is universally available in unserved and underserved, urban and rural communities to bridge the digital divide, increase digital literacy, and spur economic development.

A partnership between ION, a for-profit company based in Albany, and the Development Authority of the North Country (DANC), a public benefit corporation, will receive \$39.7 million in federal funds. ION and DANC will develop a regional broadband network to connect more than 100 community institutions, including libraries, state and community colleges, and health clinics. The ION/DANC project will enable last-mile connections to 250,000 households and 38,000 businesses.

Leveraging existing broadband networks maintained by ION and DANC will help facilitate service to a majority of rural areas in New York including communities in the North Country, Mohawk Valley, Finger Lakes Region and Western New York, as well as parts of Pennsylvania and Vermont.

In addition, Slic Network Solutions, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nicholville Telephone, will receive \$5.4 million in federal funds to build a fiber optic network in rural Franklin County. With the \$4.3 million federal grant, and a federal loan of \$1.1 million, Slic Network Solutions will extend a 136-mile fiber optic network reaching into five towns in rural Franklin County. This all-fiber network will deliver broadband voice, and IPTV services to remote rural areas. The network will offer service to more than 6,500 locations.

"The Development Authority of the North Country has seen firsthand the benefits of greater broadband access through five years operating our Open Access Telecom Network, and we applaud Governor Paterson's commitment to statewide connectivity. The North Country now has wide spread educational and medical networks, plus more than a dozen carriers providing cost competitive and state of the art services to our local businesses and institutions. We look forward to expanding the benefits of our open access network as part of our partnership with ION, and we thank Senator Betty Little and State CIO Dr. Mayberry-Stewart for convening today's Summit," said James W. Wright, Executive Director, Development Authority of the North Country.

"At ION, we are excited to leverage our existing middle mile broadband network and the recently awarded DANC/ION BTOP middle mile grant in order to connect the North Country to the rest of New York State and anywhere in the world," said Joe Calzone, Vice President, ION HoldCo, LLC.

"Broadband must be implemented so our businesses and regions can compete on a global level. In the Tri-Lakes we are believers and applied for the Google For Communities project because it would complement the efforts of CBN Connect and DANC and would bring an affordable 'last mile' to end users who could be not only be small businesses, but individuals as well," said Sylvie D. Nelson, IOM, Executive Director, Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce.

New York State is working to maximize federal stimulus funds. In April, Governor Paterson announced that the State, local governments, universities, businesses, and

not-for profits submitted 49 federal broadband stimulus grant requests totaling approximately \$600 million under the NTIA's Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP). Awards for Round 2 broadband stimulus funding are expected to be announced by September 30, 2010.

Dr. Mayberry-Stewart Chairs the New York State Broadband Development and Deployment Council established under Governor Paterson's Executive Order 22. The Council is charged to serve as the State's chief advocate for broadband development and deployment efforts to promote long term growth and enhance delivery of broadband services to all New Yorkers.

A complete list of the New York State broadband grant submissions is available at: <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants/applications/search.cfm>

For more information on the New York State Broadband Strategy and other up-to-date broadband information impacting New York State visit the NYS Broadband Federal Stimulus Website at: <http://www.nysbroadband.ny.gov/>

To view photos from the North Country Broadband Summit visit: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/nystatecio/>

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