



*Commonwealth of Virginia*  
*Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe*

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**Office of the Governor**

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**Governor McAuliffe Announces  
Crowdsourcing Initiative to Map Broadband  
Access in Virginia**

*~RUOnlineVA will engage citizens and businesses in identifying areas  
with no broadband connectivity~*

**RICHMOND** – Governor Terry McAuliffe announced today a new statewide initiative to better understand where Virginia has the largest gaps in broadband coverage. The Governor announced the initiative at a ceremony to sign House Bill 912, which clarifies and improves the process for installing communications infrastructure, benefiting rural communities. The new initiative, RUOnlineVA, provides a platform for Virginia residents and businesses to notify the Commonwealth whether or not they have access to broadband Internet connections.

RUOnlineVA is a key component of the Governor's overall strategy to increase connectivity throughout the Commonwealth. House Bill 912 makes it easier to put telecommunications infrastructure in the rights-of-way for state-maintained roads. In addition to these components, the Governor's budget includes \$2.5 million for the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative, which provides funding for infrastructure expansion in unserved areas of the Commonwealth.

Speaking at today's event, **Governor McAuliffe said**, "Broadband has become as essential as any utility for maintaining a high quality of life in our communities and meeting our economic and workforce development goals. Yet too many Virginia communities lack access to reliable, fast and affordable Internet connections. RUOnlineVa is an important way for the Commonwealth to

engage citizens and the private sector in fully understanding the problem and working to find solutions.”

“This initiative gives citizens and businesses the opportunity to have a direct impact on the future of broadband in the Commonwealth,” said **Secretary of Technology Karen Jackson**. “By identifying where the greatest demand is, RUOnlineVA will set a foundation for state-level broadband strategies and policies that will help get broadband to every part of Virginia.”

“A 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy requires high-quality broadband infrastructure,” said **Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones**. “The initiatives that we are announcing today will help Virginia in its quest to ensure that every region is equipped with the broadband infrastructure necessary for businesses to operate and create jobs.”

RUOnlineVA, which launches today and will run through early August, will leverage an online demand capture tool created by the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) and Virginia Tech’s Center for Geospatial Information Technology (CGIT). Virginia residents in need of Internet service are asked to log onto [RUOnline.virginia.gov](http://RUOnline.virginia.gov) or call (877) 969-6685 and answer a few simple questions regarding where they live and what level of connectivity they have. Responses will be aggregated, mapped, and shared with policy makers and the public to stimulate broadband policy and funding discussions throughout the remainder of the administration.

RUOnlineVA is led by CIT in partnership with CGIT and is supported by Governor McAuliffe, Secretary Jackson, Secretary Jones, Virginia Association of Counties (VACO), Virginia Municipal League (VML), Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA), Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions (VAPDC), Virginia Rural Center, Virginia Telecommunications Industry Association (VTIA), Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Department of Education (DOE), Library of Virginia, Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC), and Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC).

Beginning June 1, if you are in need of Internet service and would like to log your demand, visit [RUOnline.virginia.gov](http://RUOnline.virginia.gov). If you are unable to access the website at home, you can visit your local library or call toll free at (877) 969-6685.

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