



ESRI Broadband Mapping Debuts on Capitol Hill

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ESRI's BroadbandStat, a new application for mapping, analyzing, and validating data about high-speed Internet availability, debuted on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., in January. ESRI demonstrated the application to policy makers, industry executives, and government agency representatives at two venues, the Technology Policy Exhibition and State of the Net Conference. The Congressional Internet Caucus Advisory Committee, a private-sector organization that educates policy makers on Internet-related issues, sponsored both events.

BroadbandStat was developed in conjunction with Connected Nation, a nonprofit corporation and leader in promoting broadband expansion. The application gives states the ability to build and evaluate broadband expansion scenarios that take into account demographics, current broadband availability, and adoption barriers such as public access to computers. States can use the results to pinpoint where the expansion of new broadband services will help support local economic development. States can also post interactive maps of broadband coverage on the Internet to share the information with the public and receive feedback.

Jon Gant, a professor at the University of Illinois, Champaign, who attended the exhibition, was impressed by the BroadbandStat user-friendly interface. "Look at how smoothly the graphics transition from query to query," said Gant, who teaches GIS classes and has used GIS data for more than 20 years.

BroadbandStat results are also useful to broadband service providers.

"BroadbandStat is a very important tool," said Bob Mayfield, managing partner of Electronic Communications Systems, a small broadband provider in Tennessee. "For providers to be able to look at the market as we are developing our business plans—to see where broadband exists and where the demand is—this is the best thing that's come out in a while," Mayfield added.

The State of Tennessee is using BroadbandStat to post maps of statewide coverage on its Connected Tennessee Web site at www.connectedtn.org.

Eleven other states and the territory of Puerto Rico are currently ramping up to use BroadbandStat. The State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program recently granted more than \$20 million to support mapping projects that use the application in these states and Puerto Rico. The funds were made available through the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

For more information on BroadbandStat, visit www.esri.com/bbstat.