



New York's Senator

CHARLES E. SCHUMER

313 Hart Senate Office Building • Washington, DC 20510

Phone: (202) 224-7433 • Fax: (202) 228-1218 • Web: schumer.senate.gov

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CONTACT: Max Young

(202) 224-7433

**SCHUMER: ONTARIO'S FIBER OPTIC RING COULD BE
A MODEL FOR NATIONAL BROADBAND EXPANSION –
SCHUMER PLEDGES TO PUSH FEDS TO PICK UP
WHERE COUNTY LEFT OFF – EXPAND FIBER TO
SURROUNDING COUNTIES AND UNCOVERED
AREAS**

*FCC Wrote National Plan To Bring Broadband to 100 Million Homes by 2020;
Schumer Pledges to Urge FCC to Use Ontario as Model for Expansion*

*Schumer Pushes to Expand Broadband Access to Neighboring Counties Including
Monroe, Wayne, Seneca, Livingston and Yates Through Federal Broadband
Initiative*

*Schumer: Ontario Model Could Provide Thousands Locally and Millions Around
the Country With Broadband*

Today, U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer announced that he is calling on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to examine the success of Ontario County's Regional Fiber Network and consider it as a model as they begin their push to bring ultra high speed broadband into 100 million homes by 2020. Schumer announced support for expanding the Ontario network as part of the push, and is asking Federal agencies for support in extending Ontario County's fiber into the surrounding counties. Schumer pointed to businesses that have been attracted to Ontario County by their fiber optic network, discussed the importance of broadband to economic development and released an analysis showing what percentage of each county in the region has access to a high speed internet connection. Schumer stood at *Clear Momentum*, a company that was lured to Ontario county with the promise of high tech and high speed internet. He also stood with Mike Manikowski, the Economic Development Director for Ontario County; Ed Hemminger the Ontario County Chief Information Officer; Ted Fafinski, Chair of Ontario Board of Supervisors; Paul Tolley, the CEO of the Center for Infotonics; company executives and other local economic development officials.

"The difference between economic success and failure in a digital world will be in large part determined by access to high speed broadband," Schumer said. "We must make sure that the groundbreaking achievements of Ontario County do not go ignored, but rather are spread to the surrounding areas and the rest of the state so we can attract business, foster high tech companies, and push the state's economy into the 21st century."

The Federal Communications Commission has just released their recommendations – drafted at the request of Congress – to bring high speed broadband into 100 million homes by 2020. Schumer said that as the federal government worked to implement and alter this plan, he would push to see that the speed and access offered by the Ontario ring is expanded to surrounding counties and the state as a whole. Schumer said what will ultimately be offered by the Ontario broadband ring will be far and away better than what is currently offered in New York State and across the country. Currently, the United States is rated 15th worldwide in broadband access and 21st (behind Estonia) when the costs of broadband are taken into account. This has created a situation where the US could be left behind as the world’s economy becomes increasingly digital.

According to data from New York State, approximately 95% of networkers have access to broadband – leaving approximately 1 million users out in the cold. Additionally, the speeds available to customers lag far behind what is available other places in the world. The average download speed in New York state is 8.4 megabits per second, less than half of South Korea’s average rate of 20.4 mb/s. This rate is far too low to access all the internet’s resources, including the sharing of medical recordings, streaming video, and other crucial services. Schumer said that the Ontario ring was impressive because it not only greatly expanded access, but improved speeds as well. Fiber optics allow transferring data at rates up to 1gigabite per second. A full length DVD movie that would take approximately a day and a half to download on a dialup connection and 30 minutes to download on an average cable modem would take less than 8 seconds to download on a fiber optic network.

Schumer released the following estimate, based on data provided by New York State, of what percentage of households in each county had access to broadband. Despite the relatively widespread coverage, Schumer said that speeds were far too low and too many people were left without access.

Genesee	79.4
Livingston	75.9
Monroe	99.9
Ontario	98.8
Orleans	85.3
Wayne	91.0
Wyoming	74.8
Yates	85.1

Ontario County’s Regional Fiber Network has been a glowing success since its inception only a few years ago. The simple idea behind the program’s innovative structure was to bring together government and business to build the necessary technology to foster job creation and economic growth. The program quickly attracted regional attention and in short order was fully funded at \$7.5 million with a combination of public and private investment. The County’s initial investment of 2.5 million has paid dividends for taxpayers as businesses like Clear Momentum have come to the county to create jobs. The project is now in its final stages and is on pace to be completed by the end of 2010. When finished, the program will have laid down 180 plus miles of fiber optic cables and connected local businesses, hospitals and research hubs with the most up to date technology for broadband access.

Today, Schumer presented his proposal to use the Ontario County model to expand broadband access to the entire region and country at Clear Momentum, a Canandaigua New York based company that came to Ontario County on the promise of high speed access. Clear Momentum is able to use the county's high speed broadband to provide its customers with the most up to date financial reporting and analysis. The company has developed a national reputation for excellence and serves as a shining example of what's possible when communities have the infrastructure necessary to foster job growth.

Having access to high speed broadband improves nearly every facet of a community. Businesses with access to high speed broadband can compete with businesses throughout the world- their products are made more quickly, customers receive their goods faster and vital information can be communicated around the world in seconds. Access to broadband also improves local healthcare as doctors and surgeons can better coordinate care of patients. Moreover, high speed broadband brings local schools and college to the forefront of education. Classrooms become truly global as students and professors access and perform cutting edge research to improve their local community and make innovations.

Schumer has been fighting for the expansion of broadband in New York State, strongly supporting the provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that aimed to expand access. The ARRA provides large-scale federal funding for broadband infrastructure and deployment. The infusion of funds represents the most significant one-time investment to date in broadband. There is \$7.2 billion for investing in broadband, which is allocated between two programs. The larger program is entitled the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program and contains \$4.7 billion for competitive broadband grants and the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration to build broadband infrastructure and accelerate deployment in these unserved and underserved communities to promote economic development and job creation.

The Broadband Loans and Grants for Rural Areas Program includes \$2.5 billion in funding for projects located in rural areas.

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