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Kasich plans huge boost to Ohio's broadband network

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Ohio Gov. John Kasich announced a plan to boost the state's broadband network speeds to 100 gigabits per second, a move he hopes will accelerate research and attract new jobs.

The announcement was part of Kasich's State of the State address in Steubenville today. The effort would take place under a new agreement with Cisco and Juniper. Ohio will invest about $10 million to "open the faucet" of the state's current OARnet broadband infrastructure, which includes more 1,800 miles of fiber that connects college, universities and research institutions. Current capacity on the network is 10 Gbps.

"This is a game changer for Ohio. These almost unfathomable speeds are highly sought by leading researchers and job creators in competitive markets around the world," Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Jim Petro said. "This will solidify Ohio's standing as a technology leader thanks to the vision of our many public and private partners."

OARnet is a division of the Ohio Board of Regents. It was built to link Ohio's colleges and universities with high-speed data connections. It's a technology consortium that currently serves education, health care and government clients, but JobsOhio is looking at ways to let private companies share in its services.

Ohio public and private partners also will invest $2.3 million in a state-of-the-art innovation center that will enable and test 100 Gbps technologies.