

# Ohio Department of Development

# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
December 12, 2006

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## **CARTON ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF ECOM-OHIO STUDY** **Survey Examines Broadband Use and Accessibility to Ohio Businesses**

COLUMBUS – State Development Director Tom Carton today announced results of the 2006 Ecom-Ohio Study that was commissioned by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) to examine the availability and cost of high bandwidth network services for business and government use throughout Ohio.

The intent of the study was to identify areas of the state that face barriers to economic and workforce growth as a result of limited access to broadband services. Study findings confirm that Ohio’s major metropolitan areas are well-positioned with multiple broadband service providers, service choices and competitive pricing; but show counties with medium and low density populations have fewer choices, resulting in a higher cost for the service, which most firms find unaffordable.

“Access to and the utilization of new technologies is absolutely essential to business success in the global economy,” said Carton. “The results of the Ecom-Ohio Study will enable us to determine where we stand in broadband and Internet connectivity for all Ohio businesses and allow the State to assist in creating a strategy that will give Ohio an advantage when competing for business investments and further enhancing the skills of its workforce.”

The study was conducted by the Ohio Supercomputer Center (OSC), on behalf of the ODOD, and analyzes broadband services and Internet access in all of Ohio’s 88 counties. Areas of focus included: government, health care, state agencies and key employers. Results are expected to enable the ODOD to determine costs associated with the creation of the statewide, high-tech environment required to recruit business and industry to Ohio and to provide the workforce training necessary to meet Ohio’s future economic development needs. Findings will also serve as the basis for informed decision-making about potential public/private partnerships that could improve network connectivity in underserved areas of the state and promote economic and workforce development through improved access to education and employment opportunities.

In 2000, Ohio became the first state to measure its Internet readiness against a comprehensive set of national benchmarks by evaluating the use and demand for broadband services. The 2006 study was necessary due to the fact that since 2000, a number of developments have greatly altered the landscape of broadband access in Ohio, including the state’s Third Frontier Network, which now connects higher education and the K-12 community to a highly-scalable, advanced network.

The entire study is available online at <http://www.osc.edu>