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Space touts Broadband Task Force

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Continuing his campaign to develop greater broadband infrastructure for Southeastern Ohio, U.S. Rep. Zack Space announced that he is forming a Connecting Appalachia Broadband Task Force.

The group – made up of public officials, local leaders, and representatives of the telecommunications industry – represents voices from all ends of the spectrum, a combination Space believes is necessary to provide the network Southeastern Ohio needs in order to attract new industries and jobs.

Morgan County Commissioner Rick Shriver has been picked to serve on the task force.

“We absolutely need wider access to broadband in order to attract new industries and jobs,” Space said. “The unfortunate reality is that much of southeastern Ohio lags behind the rest of the nation in the deployment of this technology. Our mission must be to ‘Connect Appalachia.’ If we’re able to push economic development for this region, we must do everything we can to facilitate the expansion of broadband access.”

Space held two one-day summits in the district last month to discuss the barriers to access and what can be done to overcome them. Over one hundred people representing all aspects of the broadband issue attended each event.

Shriver joins two other county commissioners on the task force in Ed Armstrong of Jackson County and Tom Wheaton of Carroll County.

Others picked to serve on the task force include Stan Ahalt, Executive Director of the Ohio Supercomputer Center (OSC); Fred Deel, Director of the Governor’s Office of Appalachia; Randy Hunt, State Director for Ohio, Rural Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Chris Chapman, Ohio Office of Information Technology; Harry Eadon, Tuscarawas County Port Authority; Ken Peters, resident of Carroll County; Gary Little, President of Information Technology Alliance of Appalachian Ohio (ITAAO); Cheryl Burchard, Ohio Telecommunication Association (OTA); and Jon McGee, Ohio Cable Telecommunications Association (OCTA).
