CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

        of the

COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT,
    WITH BROADBAND ADVISORY PANEL

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                    March 5, 2008
                    Start: XX:XXam/pm
                    Recess: XX:XXam/pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
                    City Hall

B E F O R E:

                    GALE BREWER
                    Chairperson

    COUNCIL MEMBERS:

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Sam Farag
Chairman, Chapter 076
SCORE

Dr. Salvatore Volpe
Representative
Medical Society of the State of New York and the
New York City Department of Health Mental Hygiene PCIP
Program

Reverend John T. Ryan
Representative
Project Hospitality

Dr. Zhangyong Zhang
Computer Science faculty member
College of Staten Island

Bea Victor
Representative
Senior Net

Kim Faulcon
Director of Telecommunications
Staten Island University Hospital

Joey Cardona
Representative
Seamens Family and Children Society

Michael Kress
Vice President for Technology Systems
College of Staten Island

Marisa Parish
Network Manager, State Island
New York Public Library

Courtney Castellane
Children's Librarian Trainee
New York Public Library

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Ben Tuorto
Vice President of Sales for Microwave Satellite
Technologies
MST-NuVisions

Paula Coyle
Membership Director
Staten Island Economic Development Corporation

Beverly Newhouse
Executive Director
Richmond Senior Services

Daniel Coates
Representative
Make the Road New York

Wayne Roy
Chief Technology Officer
Troy Net

Nikki Odlivak
Representative
Community Agency for Senior Citizens

Kayza Kleinman
Chief Information Officer
Jewish Community Council of Coney Island

Vincent Renza
Executive Director
Staten Island NFP Association

Valerie DeAngelo
Student
College of Staten Island

Louis Glovner
Representative
Unknown nonprofit organization

2   MALE VOICE: --committee member,

3   and the Dean of the School with Public Affairs.

4   I'll be chairing this committee hearing today on

5   behalf of Committee Chair Sean Bell [phonetic],

6   who sits to my right. I'd like to begin by

7   introducing our host for today's event, we're very

8   grateful to the College of Staten Island for this

9   wonderful facility, which we're going to occupy

10   for a good portion of the day. And it's my great

11   pleasure to introduce President Tomás Morales.

12   [applause]

13   TOMÁS MORALES: Thank you. I'd

14   first like to thank Councilwoman Brewer and

15   welcome all of you to the College of Staten

16   Island. We at the college are very honored that

17   you've chosen our campus for this important City

18   Council hearing. The College of Staten Island is

19   also an appropriate venue. If you look at the map

20   of Staten Island, you'll see that CSI is very near

21   the physical center of the borough. Our

22   centrality is more than a geographical oddity; it

23   is also a metaphor for our school. With nearly

24   13,000 students, 2,000 employees, students ranging

25   from doctoral candidates to baccalaureate masters

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2   and even associate degree, our faculty is second

3   to none, and our facilities as you can see are

4   exceptional. We are also, Madam Chair, a wireless

5   campus, affording all students, faculty and staff,

6   fast and free access to the power of the internet.

7   Every new student is also engaged in a very

8   detailed literacy information workshop, as part of

9   their freshman English course. Our decision to

10   provide this service was not merely for

11   convenience. At CSI, indeed all across CUNY, we

12   believe that internet access is an essential part

13   of building and maintaining a civil and educated

14   society. We continue to do cutting edge work in

15   this area. Our faculty in the computer science

16   department, has developed a proposal for inclusion

17   in the federal and state stimulus plan. If

18   implemented, the proposal would deliver free

19   internet service on Staten Island, the Staten

20   Island Ferry, via broadband wireless technology.

21   In addition, we continue to explore opportunities

22   for the development of CSI learning communities

23   that will network off campus venues for the

24   purpose of enhancing educational instruction. The

25   system will use both broadband and wireless

2   networks to expand access to communities, such as

3   senior citizens and high school, and even buses

4   carrying our CSI students, faculty and staff. We

5   implemented the shuttle service this past

6   September, and we're hoping to provide wireless

7   service for students while they're being

8   transported to the campus. This system will not,

9   will definitely [interference] we hope to retrain

10 veterans, Americans with disabilities, part time

11 workers, and persons seeking retraining for new

12 jobs and advancement. Reduced use of congested

13 roadways and public transit are additional

14 benefits for our city. As you can see, CSI is in

15 sync with the work of this important committee.

16 Once again, I'm delighted you've chosen CSI to

17 host your hearing, and I wish you a productive and

18 excellent - - .

19   MALE VOICE: Thank you.

20   [applause]

21   MALE VOICE: Thank you, President

22 Morales, and thank you so much for this facility.

23 It's just a terrific boon to this committee and

24 the work that we have to do today. Speaking of

25 the work that we have to do today, it never would

get underway and never does get underway without

the good offices of the Chair of the City Council

Technology and Government Committee, Councilmember

from the Sixth District Gale Brewer.

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Good morning,

thank you very much. I am Gale Brewer and I chair

the Committee on Technology and Government. And I

must admit, I didn't know that we would get to

such a great day today. Because not only has this

committee worked incredibly hard and very

intelligently, both with the chair and the chairs

of the committee, the one who does the every day

work and - - does the broad work, and all of the

members. We also have also sort of group of

people who desperately about broadband, and

figuring out a way that communities that are

underserved get access. Those of you in this

room, and I think those of you who might pay

attention in the future, are the leaders on this

topic. There are not millions of us, but there

certainly are thousands. And I can't tell you how

much I appreciate everyone being here today,

because I know that you understand what we're

trying to accomplish. And it's not easy. There's

some really good news, though, what we'll hear

later about, what makes me so pleased to be part

of this discussion, which is thanks to our

President, thanks to people in Congress, and

thanks to Americans across this country, they are

beginning to understand this. And although

complicated, not yet transparent, but definitely

clear that something's in the works. And our

friends in Washington, they can help match the

great work that we've been trying to do. Not yet

successfully, but trying to do here in the city.

So we kind of want to just start day-to-day.

You'll hear more about it, it's kind of cutting

edge, could in fact be something really positive

for communities that need to be wired in our city,

and for institutions and non-profits and

governments and small businesses, to be part of

this next generation. And it's really a pleasure,

because without the work everyone has put into

this discussion and this topic up to now, we

wouldn't be at this point. So, I want to say

thank you. I also want to thank Jamal Mahacher

[phonetic] from our office, and Juan from our

office, Deputy Counsel to the Committee, - - the

person who handled some of the writing and

certainly all of the policy analysts. And the

Sergeant-at-Arms, Israel Rodriguez, who comes with

us often, as we travel around the five boroughs.

So this is the last of our hearings, but certainly

not the end of the discussion or the end of the

report. We also have staff here from

Councilmember Oddo and Councilmember, State

Senator Andy - - . And I really appreciate your

being here, and I want to thank all the elected

officials, from the borough President of Staten

Island, who helped us publicize this event and

this hearing here today. Thank you very much, Mr.

Chair.

                    [applause]

                    MALE VOICE: That applause is

richly deserved and should be long sustained.

There is no more articulate, more insistent, or

more informed a voice on issues facing the issue

in technology than Gale Brewer, for many years

now. As I mentioned earlier, I don't actually

chair this committee, I merely play a chair at

borough hearings. And I'd like to introduce now

the person who is the chair of the committee, Sean

2   Bell.

3   [applause]

4   SEAN BELL: Good morning, everyone.

5   It is certainly a pleasure for the entire

6   committee to be here, to join each of you and, and

7   hopefully this will be a rich a dialogue around

8   what your concerns are, relative to where the

9   technology is going, broadband in particular.

10   Today, as Councilmember Brewer said, is the last

11   of our series of town hall meetings, so to speak,

12   so today's an opportunity to get everything that

13   you've missed in the last meetings, or those of

14   you who've attended. The purpose of this

15   committee is really to look at each, each segment

16   of the city, and to understand what the needs are.

17   So, today you have an opportunity to sort of,

18   what's your concerns, what's your opinions, and

19   certainly provide us with comments. We're going

20   to be sort of looking at all, all of your

21   comments, all of your concerns, and taking them

22   into consideration, as we look to really formulate

23   the strategy all over New York City. The next

24   step for our committee will be to sort of not only

25   take your ideas and comments, but also to look at

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2   the studies that have been, that have been put

3   out, and as Councilmember Brewer said, to really

4   look at some of the, the exciting things that are

5   going to be coming out relative to the stimulus -

6   - and so forth. So, on behalf of the entire

7   committee, I'd like to, you know, encourage each

8   of you to really take the opportunity to let us

9   know what you think, and where we can be of

10   service, and what we can do, maybe, and

11   collectively I can assure you that we're very much

12   interested in not only try to address a lot of

13   your concerns, but really trying to formulate a

14   strategy that works well for New York City. And I

15   think we have the time, it is right, it's been a

16   long, a long wait for us to get here, but the time

17   is right. So, without any further ado, I'm going

18   to turn things over to, to David Birch, to also

19   get the show going. Thank you.

20   [applause]

21   DAVID BIRCH: Thank you very much,

22   Chairman Bell. What I'd like to do now is just

23   ask the members of the Committee to introduce

24   themselves briefly. Those you haven't heard from

25   yet, and then we will get underway and I'll

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2   explain the order the business. So if we could

3   start on my far left with Jose Luis Rodriguez.

4   JOSE LUIS RODRIGUEZ: My name is

5   Jose Luis Rodriguez, I'm the President/CEO of

6   HITN, which stands for the, Hispanic Information

7   and Telecommunications Network. We are the group

8   - - . Thank you.

9   ANTHONY TOWNSEND: My name is

10   Anthony Townsend, I'm a technology analyst for the

11   Institute for the Future. I'm also a cofounder of

12   NYC Wireless.

13   NEAL PARISER: Good morning, my

14   name is Neal Pariser, senior vice president of

15   SOBRO, South Bronx - - Corporation. I'm very

16   knowledgeable of broadband, it's something we need

17   to lift up every community, and we're, it's a

18   pleasure to be here and thank you Councilwoman.

19   AVI DUVDEVANI: I'm Avi Duvdevani,

20   I'm the chief information officer for the New York

21   City Housing Authority.

22   VINNIE GRIPPO: And Vinnie Grippo,

23   chief of staff at New York City Department of

24   Information Technology and Telecommunications.

25   MALE VOICE: Thanks, everyone. Our

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2   purpose here today, as Chairman Bell mentioned, is

3   to hear from you, and your concerns relating to

4   broadband, in Staten Island particularly, but if

5   you'd like to add say a larger sphere of

6   influence, that's great. We're interested in

7   hearing all the ideas that you have to bring to

8   the committee. This is how this will work. I

9   will calls names. If you do want to speak, please

10   remember that you must fill out one of these

11   forms, and those are available at the table just

12   outside the door to this auditorium. I will call

13   them in the order that I receive them, and because

14   we don't have a large number of names, normally at

15   these hearings we limit people to two minute

16   comments. Today, we will go to three minutes.

17   And I believe that we don't have, excuse me, a

18   clock. No, we don't have a clock here, right?

19   So, when you have one minute left, I will do this.

20   So, just showing you the one minute mark, and then

21   I'd ask you to wrap your remarks up within those

22   next 60 seconds, please. After you're finished,

23   members of the committee may or may not have

24   questions for you, so please remain behind the

25   microphone, and then I will indicate when it's

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2 time to move on to the next speaker. So, if that

3 is all clear, microphone is over here, stage

4 right. I would like to call to the microphone Sam

5 Farag, from SCORE.

6 SAM FARAG: Thank you, Council

7 Brewer, and all your colleagues here today, in our

8 hall, to listen to our, to us, about the need for

9 more investment in the broadband arena, and why.

10 My name is Sam Farag, and I am the Chairman of

11 SCORE Chapter 076. SCORE stands for Service Corp

12 of Retired Executives, and counselor to American

13 small business. We are a not-for-profit group,

14 staffed by volunteers, and operate as an arm of

15 the United States Small Business Administration,

16 the SBA. As a self-sufficient operation, we have

17 received - - funding from the SBA, and from our

18 elected officials, which we are hoping to increase

19 after they hear my testimony. Our goal are to

20 provide stopgap small businesses and establish

21 businesses free confidential, face-to-face, and

22 cyber-counseling, as well as visiting them at

23 their business location. We also provide seminar

24 and a website and courses. We have been servicing

25 the need for State Island business community for

more than 25 years. Commerce and internet have

increased greatly in recent years. As such, we

have been counseling all our client on how to

become more and more involved, with the use of the

internet and as part of their marketing strategy.

SCORE has been extremely active in providing

seminar on the latest marketing technique, made

possible by the growth of the Web 2.0. By using

the blogs, social networks, such as Facebook,

Youtube, and many other Web 2.0 program, and - -

has obtained many new contact and customers. We

also go to the high school and the - - and provide

them with seminar for career building and

entrepreneurship. Here are some of the - -

statistic about internet and the high school, in

the schools.

MALE VOICE: You still have 30

seconds left, Mr. Farag.

SAM FARAG: Alright, thank you.

Alright, and John - - . It just some, some stuff

I found, surf internet, and maybe you can consider

some of the things. The Swedish government

subsidize - - via tax deductible, for companies

that both computer for their employees personal

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2   use. Result that almost 90 percent of the Swedish

3   can get access to the internet at home and PCs.

4   DSL - - be obsolete, has a technology that's

5   available - - other things. USA, U.S. user pay

6    $53 a month for high speed service, compared to

7    $32 in Germany, and $32, $33 in Britain. Thank

8   you for listening, and welcome to our island.

9   MALE VOICE: Thank you very much,

10   Mr. Farag. Please remain standing - - the

11   questions from the committee. Questions from the

12   committee.

13   MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

14   My question would be, since you are involved,

15   thank you, with the small business community of

16   Staten Island. I know you mentioned that you, you

17   do cyber-counseling. What do you think the

18   percentage is of those businesses that do have

19   access? And I, I know that the SoBro in the South

20   Bronx has worked hard on this, with some of their

21   small businesses, because one of the problems is

22   sometimes, even if you have access, you don't

23   really know how to use it to help your bottom

24   line. So how do you think more access would be

25   helpful? And how do you think we should be

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2   supporting those that do have access for your

3   small business?

4   SAM FARAG: Sure.   We get refer

5   from SCORE National, anybody in any place, they

6   can just send request, you know, to - - depending

7   on what the subject is.   So we have 20 members and

8   very, like free answers lot of things.   So when we

9   get, when Washington get, they would send it to

10   us, we - - right away.   The issue is for us on DSL

11   or any other technology, and the cost also.   So

12   it's very hard because we don't really get much

13   money from that.   We also refer our client when

14   they come to us.   If they cannot come, they still

15   can send us email and we correspondence with them

16   back and forth, through email and any - - .

17   MALE VOICE: Thank you, Mr. Farag.

18   SAM FARAG: Thank you.

19   MALE VOICE: I'd next like to call

20   Dr. Salvatore Volpe, who represents the Medical

21   Society of the State of New York.   Dr. Volpe.

22   SALVATORE VOLPE: Good morning.   I

23   want to thank the committee for giving me the

24   opportunity to come here.   In addition to working

25   for the State Medical Society, I also work for the

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2   New York City Department of Health Mental Hygiene

3   PCIP program. And we've currently deployed 1000

4   EHRs as of the end of the December. And we hope

5   to deploy about 1000 over the next year. And

6   private practice here on Staten Island for about

7   19 years. One of the things that we've doing in

8   addition to looking at how to get electronic

9   health records into doctors' offices is how to

10   work the other side of the equation and get

11   patients more involved. And that's where

12   broadband I think makes a big difference. There

13   is six different activities that a patient could

14   be involved with. It would be looking up

15   information for themselves, looking up information

16   for someone they care about, purchasing

17   medications and perhaps durable medical equipment;

18   they could also be participating in support

19   groups, as well as communicating with their

20   doctors, and also, after they look up something on

21   the internet, at the office visit, talking to

22   their healthcare providers about what they need.

23   It's only when you have broadband that you have

24   this concept of "always on." I mean, I've been,

25   I'm old enough to remember when I had tin cans

when I was a little kid, and rotary princess phone

in my parents' room; and now I've got this

wireless network in my house. And the difference

for me is to download a ten megabyte file, which

you can get from the Medline Plus, or with the

CDC, could take over a half hour, with a 56K dial

up. But with broadband, it's like 30 seconds.

So, what they've done at Medline Plus, for

instance, they have translations in Spanish. So

if someone wants to learn about asthma, wants to

learn about a procedure that's coming up, anyone

can look this up, but it would be a barrier if

they had to do it with dial up. So broadband

gives them the opportunity to get a lot of

information, also community with their healthcare

providers. We set up a patient portal in our

practice, so patients can communicate with us

whether they need refills, appointments,

specialist referrals, but also just to ask us

questions. Again, broadband facilities this two

way communication. And unlike some physicians who

maybe were a little concerned that they would be

swamped with emails, really it doesn't happen. It

covered, as far as our patients, we have patients

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2   up to 85 who are emailing me. So, that's a great

3   thing for me, because it returns, it makes my

4   office more efficient. There's less telephone

5   time, for simple things that could be handled the

6   way we do everything else, order airline tickets,

7   do our ATM banking. So I want to encourage the

8   city to please promote broadband access, you know,

9   throughout all demographics, especially the

10   underserved, where they could access to library -

11   - centers, where they just - - . That's it.

12   MALE VOICE: Thank you, Dr. Volpe.

13   Are there questions for Dr. Volpe.

14   PANELIST: Doctor, just, have you

15   found that a number of your patients do not have

16   the access to broadband? Is that your concern?

17   SALVATORE VOLPE: Yes. Depending

18   on where they live, they may or may not have

19   cable, but cable's about 98 percent I think on

20   Staten Island. They may only - - have files. But

21   in the poorer communities, they tend to rely more

22   on dial up modems, they don't necessarily have the

23   subscription for like $100 a month, to do these

24   combo packages that are available. So that I

25   think is a barrier to them.

PANELIST: So, it's a question of

cost.

SALVATORE VOLPE: Question of cost.

And also, does, it's not just broadband access at

home, there's also the concept of internet access

on their smartphones. Because one of the things

we're looking to do potentially is having the

electronic health record send out to my list of

patients, "You have an appointment tomorrow,"

"It's flu season, you should be getting a flu

shot." We could also be giving them other

reminders, "You need to go for your colonoscopy,

you're overdue for that." Mammograms. You can

make it as explicit or not as obvious as possible,

depending upon HIPPA regulations and somewhat.

But the idea of being able to push that

information to patients, no matter where they are,

and even a free cell phone can take text message.

It is a great thing. But we want to expand it

beyond cell phones, to encourage them to do stuff

from home. And with this two way communication,

in addition to me reminding, "Go for your

appointment," we'll have the capability of the

patient replying back, saying yes they're going to

come, or "I already got my flu shot," and then it

wouldn't be discussed later on. It's not meant

for a long dialogue. But broadband is instant on

no matter where you are. Facilitates this. We've

seen a large number of people using more

intelligent phones, as opposed to just the typical

cell phone that I gave my parents. - -

PANELIST: Dr. Volpe, I was curious

as to what you have observed or experienced being

adopted by the senior population. - - information

that could be provided - - facilities - - .

SALVATORE VOLPE: I can say that

the first hurdle was getting the doctors to get

the electronic health records. The next hurdle is

now having, let patients know that this stuff is

even available. So we're looking at producing

marketing materials that would be disseminated

throughout the city, so our patients would know,

"Your doctor, if he or she belongs to this

program, has a patient portal." Feel free to go

to, again, public library, community health

center, religious center, and get a kiosk where a

person could enter information and communicate

with the doctor. Right now we haven't broached

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2   that on a large basis. I can just tell you from

3   my own personal experience, that we've been able

4   to collect at least 50 to 75 percent of our

5   patients' emails. And I send out quarterly

6   reminders to this list. And it's very encouraging

7   when they reply back. It may take 'em 30 days.

8   You know, it's not like me every 15 minutes, you

9   know, your Blackberry is constantly reminding you

10   of things to do. But it's not meant to be 911.

11   It's meant to be, "Let's maintain a dialogue.

12   Let's encourage you to do what's better for you."

13   I just got certified for patient center home, and

14   the concept behind that is let's not just provide

15   urgent care, if you're a primary care doctor, but

16   complete care. And that means we have to teach

17   patients to take care of themselves. Again, we've

18   got a, a website, it's a static page, it's nothing

19   too fancy. But it's got links to the CDC, Medline

20   Plus, to welfare agencies, other sites, so our

21   patients can access information before even going

22   to your - - .

23   MALE VOICE: We have been joined by

24   Committee Member Tom Dunn of Horizon - -. Welcome

25   Tom. Councilmember Brewer.

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2   TOM DUNN: Mr. Chair.

3   MALE VOICE: Sir.

4   TOM DUNN: I left Horizon in

5   September, and went to Fordham University.

6   MALE VOICE: A noble posting, sir.

7   [laughter] Welcome to the - - . It's a wonderful

8   thing.

9   TOM DUNN: I love this place.

10   MALE VOICE: Thank you.

11   MALE VOICE: - -

12   MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

13   I think you should just take over HHS and so on

14   and so forth.

15   SALVATORE VOLPE: I did pay my

16   taxes, so - - [laughter] Thank you.

17   PANELIST: I have a question.

18   MALE VOICE: Yeah, let me just, the

19   quick question I have is, I know that Dr. Reader

20   [phonetic] has been pushing this. We put City

21   Council money into it, with the, some of the

22   community health centers, trying to get them up to

23   par, and of course the hospitals. So just in

24   general, Staten Island, I know you, it's hard to

25   get the doctors to feel comfortable, it's hard to

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2   get your patients to feel comfortable. You think

3   there's enough funding and collaboration with the

4   community health centers here, and the hospitals

5   also? Unlike the - - records?

6   SALVATORE VOLPE: Yes, I believe

7   there is a certain amount of collaboration.

8   There's also inertia from the physicians, because

9   they're concerned about, not just the cost of the

10   software, which through the city deal is like 85

11   percent discount, so that's not a real barrier.

12   The barrier for physicians is a belief, and that's

13   what I try to encourage when I lecture these

14   doctors, that there is a support system. The

15   typical model is you buy a software package from a

16   vendor, and you shake hands and then they go away.

17   And then if the computer gives you that blue

18   screen of death, you don't know what to do. Well,

19   what we've done with PCIP is, we've developed the

20   equivalent of a patient centered medical home, but

21   this is for electronic health records. So that

22   we've got, not only do we give 'em three to four

23   days training, like I've done, we only had three

24   days, we give, we give 'em ten days. In addition

25   to ten days of formal technical training, we have

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2   quality assurance experts that are going into the

3   practices weeks and month later, to remind them of

4   what's available in the system, but also to

5   address questions as they arise. It's that

6   support system that's going to permit this project

7   to survive. And as far as I know, we have like a

8   99 percent retention rate after a year, compared

9   to industry averages of about 75 percent. And I

10   think that extra 28 percent, or 23 percent, is

11   because we provide the TLC after the software is

12   installed. Doctors need that, they can't, they

13   don't want to be put in the position where they're

14   staring at this laptop, about the patient, and

15   it's giving them a big question mark. They need

16   to be able to call someone and get help. And

17   that's what we're, we're helping them to do, is

18   feel comfortable. So I think over the next few

19   months we're going to see a larger adoption here

20   on Staten Island, because we, what happens is, you

21   get the early adopters, but then what happens is,

22   you have a lot of "me, toos" that come out. And

23   once they see that it's not just Volpe, but it's

24   someone else, and someone else, then you - - .

25   MALE VOICE: Thank you.

2   PANELIST: Yes, you mention a

3   number of areas where it should be addressed. If

4   you have the opportunity to enumerate three, very

5   quickly, three areas that you will prioritize, in

6   terms of the opportunities, that might be there

7   for funding, based on what the Obama

8   administration has indicated in terms of, of the

9   other, of health, they want to do a number of

10   things in the area, on the broadband stimulus

11   package. What would be those three things that

12   you will recommend to be a priority in New York

13   City? And in the health area.

14   SALVATORE VOLPE: Well, on the

15   health area, if, if there is an adoption by, by

16   the underserved communities, it's irrelevant how

17   many wires we put out in the city. So, one is a

18   big education because we have to let people know

19   what's available. Two, we need to provide them

20   with content that's useful. So, New York City is

21   very unique. I mean, we, we have about 150 to

22   5,000 languages now. We need to work from the top

23   and down and try, try and get as much translated

24   to languages that people can understand. It's not

25   enough for me to push a reminder about mammograms

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2 and the importance of mammograms to someone who

3 doesn't speak - - . So, we need to let people

4 know that the stuff is out there, we need to put

5 it in a language that's accessible to them. And

6 then I think what we, we also need to do, is we

7 need to look at the information that's going to be

8 coming back from PCIP. With the Take Care New

9 York initiative, one of the advantages is with the

10 electronic health records are going to push out

11 reports. It's going to be de-identified, so a

12 patient's confidentiality is maintained. But

13 we're going to be looking at gaps in care. It'll

14 be the first time, other than a doctor at a dinner

15 meeting complaining about something, and not

16 knowing if the right person's listening, that will

17 be with them, they can collect this information.

18 And then it'll be up to the City to look at this.

19 An example, would be mammogram centers. I use

20 that as an analogy all the time. You look at

21 Staten Island, relatively affluent borough, I

22 think we have about 25 mammogram center--MRI

23 centers, 25 MRI centers, but I think we have two

24 mammogram centers. Now, if my mom misses her

25 appointment for her mammogram tomorrow, she may

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2   have to wait another 365 days to get another

3   appointment. It's just a matter of, there just

4   isn't, aren't enough centers. Well, once, once

5   government, once payers can get access to this,

6   these areas of deficiencies, it makes it easier to

7   target. So it may turn out that we need more

8   mammogram centers. And we have to figure out how

9   to do it. I'm also on the board of - - company,

10   insurance company, and I can tell you, number one

11   reason for litigation in New York State, it's

12   failure to diagnose breast cancer. If you're a

13   radiologist, you may not choose to go into

14   mammogram reading because of the high litigation

15   rate. Doesn't mean you're not a good physician,

16   it just means that there's a little bit more

17   stress involved in that, that job. And the

18   reimbursement for mammograms has been historically

19   low. So, their premiums are high, but

20   reimbursement is low. The stress level is high.

21   Maybe that's why we have 25 mamm--MRI centers and

22   only two mammogram centers, when we have several

23   hundred thousand women, and at least 100,000 of

24   them might qualify for mammograms on an annual

25   basis.

2   MALE VOICE: Thank you.

3   SALVATORE VOLPE: Thanks.

4   MALE VOICE: I'd like to call next

5   the Reverend John Ryan, from Project Hospitality.

6   JOHN RYAN: Good morning,

7   Councilwoman Brewer and Chairs, and Mr. Dunn, I

8   hope Father McShane treats you well. [laughter]

9   I am a technological idiot, and there is a great

10 deal of humor in the office that I was sent here

11 like Daniel in the Lion's Den. I'm a substitute

12 for Reverend Terry Troy. Let me just say this:

13 Project Hospitality, for years, has been serving

14 the hungry, the homeless, and people with HIV/AIDS

15 on this island. It's a very underserved

16 population, and it's precisely what you're doing

17 in terms of broadband hearing, that can address

18 the really terrible divide that exists now between

19 our clients and a number of people on Staten

20 Island. These are people who not only don't have

21 access to a number of things, but they don't even

22 know they're there. So the key issues here are

23 money, education, and access. And it certainly

24 sounds like the work that's been done in the city

25 already, through your committee and the City

Council, and what's coming out of Washington now,

provides hope to address these issues. We have

clients who come in daily to our sites, we have a

sophisticated IT operation in our offices, and

these clients come in now, and there are more and

more of them weekly coming in because of the

economic downturn. If it were not for access to

our limited number of computers, and some of those

in libraries, they would not be able to do job

hunts, job research, finding out about their

benefits. There's another issue here that's real.

For a number of people who are coming to us,

frustration levels are very real. Unless the

facility provides something that can be done

easily, which you can educate people to, they're

going to give up. And if they give up, they

continue this divide, and they're being

underserved. So what do groups like us need? We

need to see more coming from the City in terms of

funding, in terms of ability to access things.

And we need the ability to know at times where

funding streams exist that we might know of, not

know about. So I just commend the committee, and

I commend the people who are doing liaison with

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2   Washington now, because unless this is done, we're

3   going to continue to have an underclass, not only

4   of people economically, but a technological

5   underclass that is going to provide major social

6   problems for us in the future. So I thank you

7   very much.

8   MALE VOICE: Thank you. Are there

9   questions for Reverend Ryan?

10   JOHN RYAN: Just not technological

11   ones. [laughter]

12   MALE VOICE: I - - like Father

13   McShane - - .

14   JOHN RYAN: Excellent, thank you.

15   MALE VOICE: My question is when,

16   one of the issues that we've been grappling with

17   as a committee, and in general, is how and where

18   and with what kind of staffing, you basically have

19   a wonderful computer training center, you can call

20   it whatever you want. But that's certainly what

21   you have. What kind of staffing do you need for

22   that, because certainly frustration comes, you may

23   not know the best job seeking benefit sites, etc.

24   Just having a computer may not be enough. What do

25   you, what would you see as the best way to have a

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2   CTC.

3   JOHN RYAN: Well, if I knew what a

4   CTC was, I'd probably answer that highly

5   intelligently. But I will say this, one of the

6   key things we need new addressed, and that's the

7   ability for language and translation. If this

8   stuff is just in English, a very substantive part

9   of people will be eliminated from. So we need

10   translators, we need people who are

11   technologically competent. And we need the

12   facilities in the locations where people can

13   access. Because so many of the people we serve

14   will not have computers in their own home.

15   JOSE LUIS RODRIGUEZ: You mention

16   that in order for these centers to be successful,

17   that an educational component must exist. Can you

18   explain that a little bit, that--

19   JOHN RYAN: Well, I think so many

20   of our people don't know what you're talking

21   about. They wouldn't know the word broadband from

22   a turkey. They just wouldn't know it. It's not

23   something--they might've heard the word in

24   passing, but the concept for so many people,

25   including a number of immigrants, is a foreign

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2   one. And that has to be able to be able to be

3   easily explained to people, with hands-on ability

4   and not much frustration, because otherwise you'll

5   lose them. Later on you can tell me what that

6   whatever it was was.

7   PANELIST: Can I ask a low tech

8   technology question?

9   JOHN RYAN: Oh, certainly. Or a no

10   tech.

11   PANELIST: Low tech. Are you on

12   broadband?

13   JOHN RYAN: We have some facilities

14   in our, on our sites, but not, not many as far as

15   I know. But I would be lying if I said I was sure

16   of that.

17   PANELIST: So you're not completely

18   broadband, you're partial.

19   JOHN RYAN: Oh, certainly not, I

20   don't think so, no.

21   PANELIST: And when people come in,

22   you have staff, council was saying that, with a

23   system in terms of - - usage, is that pretty much

24   what you're doing this for?

25   JOHN RYAN: In terms of helping

them search for--

PANELIST: Right, for jobs.

JOHN RYAN: We have, well we certainly don't have enough staffing and funding to do that well. Especially in the light of, for instance, in the last six months, we have served more meals, and that's the point of entry for people. Frequently hungry people come in, they come in and they get legal advice, they get medical advice, they get this, that and the other thing. But we've had a 33 percent rise in the number of people coming to us in the last few months. So we're swamped. So it's removed to these type of things, which are critical. We need more staff, more funding.

PANELIST: Thank you.

MALE VOICE: Thank you, Reverend Ryan. I'd like to call Dr. Zhangyong Zhang, from the College of Staten Island.

ZHANGYONG ZHANG: Good morning. Welcome to Staten Island, particularly welcome to College of Staten Island. My name is Zhangyong Zhang, I'm a faculty member at computer science department at this college. I, I just hear this,

hearing this news a few days ago, so I wish I can

well better prepare. But what I, - - is I, well

I'm very glad to hear we have several member of

the community is expert in the wireless and

broadband communication. The communication that's

been flowing down is human civilization

communication, has been critical part of our

civilization, and our ability to adapt - -

civilization and our - - . There has been a

drain, I call it, is three key words is be able to

communicate, access information from everywhere,

for anytime, and for everyone. With the demand -

- computer and wireless technology, we have

achieved, this dream has been, has becoming

reality. But as long as we can do it for

everyone, that's the key, for everyone. And we

cannot fulfill our dream fully. And my comment is

mostly two areas. One is, within College of

Staten Island, was where I have a lot of colleague

members, we have resource expertise in - -

communication, and broadband communication area.

And so the local community on Staten Island, will

wish we have, we were better funded, and we have

several proposal come in the, in the working, and

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2   also several project in the, in progress. And

3   that's one general area we think we should use

4   this resource more. Second area is internal

5   particular concrete idea and proposals. We do

6   have some of the proposals working right now, but

7   one is we should provide broadband wireless

8   service for the ferry for the ferries. So we gave

9   the ferry writers free access to, to the internet,

10 and they can check email, browser, and it will

11 make Staten Islanders better, more productive.

12 And more, a better adaptive working force.

13 Technically, that can be done - - I think this

14 community is exactly what we needed to coordinate

15 all the - - for - - to make that happen. And we

16 have expertise, can make that happen. We need a

17 family, we need help. There's a lot of other

18 areas, in term of how to improve people's living

19 standard in urban environment. There are several

20 colleagues of mine working on that, too, - - aging

21 populations. We have - - wireless sensor

22 capability, so that the senior can stay home,

23 meanwhile have their critical condition be

24 monitored, and take care of. Thank you.

25   MALE VOICE: Thank you, Dr. Zhang.

2   Do you have questions for Dr. Zhang?

3   PANELIST: Yes, very quickly, I

4   have heard, I think already, by three of the - -,

5   I mean of the free centers, wireless, and you

6   emphasize on that. Can you - - , can you tell me

7   why wireless is the great important technology to

8   be available for what you need to do?

9   ZHANGYONG ZHANG: Certainly. Very

10   easy, and obviously if you provide internet

11   service on the ferry, not only on the terminal,

12   but on the boat. The boat is moving. It would be

13   difficult to attach a wire to the, to the boat.

14   So wireless is, is [laughter] is definitely

15   advantage technology. Secondly, in my research

16   area recently, I been work with telecommunications

17   and IT industry for over ten years before I joined

18   the college, I work for AT&T and Lucent before - -

19   for the aging societies, we have some, developed

20   some concept of smart home, which giving the

21   senior citizens, and they want to first stay home,

22   but they want their health - - condition closely

23   watched, monitored, and it would be difficult to

24   attach a wire to a human body, well that you don't

25   want to restrict the freedom of movement of that

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2   person. So, that's, that's why wireless and with

3   other technologies, have become so important.

4   PANELIST: Thank you.

5   MALE VOICE: Chairman Dunn.

6   CHAIRMAN DUNN: You mentioned that

7   the university has been working on several

8   proposals. I'm interested to, to understand what

9   type of proposals you're putting together and, you

10   know, what needs you see.

11   ZHANGYONG ZHANG: One, for example,

12   in the, in the free internet service for family

13   terminals, that's actually one of the - - people -

14   - work on. And I have one page of executive

15   summary I can share with the committee members.

16   There's other proposals in telecommunication, we

17   have, for example, with the smart home concept.

18   Another one, - - mentioned to us is we gave - - we

19   developed some models. We want to evaluate

20   models. We rely heavily on simulation, on your

21   simulations. And because recently we have,

22   without the, the help of the, the City and

23   development, we have only one, probably one of the

24   fast, the powerful computer center, high

25   performance computer center, located in this

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2   campus. We've been, I've been using that to, to

3   work with simulators. So there's a proposal for -

4   - the research, and we should have the computation

5   the two user facilities and things like, in that,

6   in that area, in that nature.

7   CHAIRMAN DUNN: Do you envision

8   many of these things, if you're able to get the

9   funding, the sort of freedom to really be able to

10   put them on a universal sort of platform? Is

11   that, I mean, you've mentioned specific things as,

12   you know, such as the Staten Island Ferry, and so

13   forth. But in terms of being able to replicate

14   these, these concepts.

15   PANELIST: Can I ask a related

16   question? Which is, you know, is there any

17   commercial spinoff potential in these projects,

18   that would generate economic activity or create

19   new funds in Staten Island - -

20   ZHANGYONG ZHANG: Yes, I think that

21   that is, - - free service, well the service is

22   free, because, should be free, because we can do

23   our - - provide a service for everyone. There's a

24   - - gentleman who come before me, already

25   testified that. So that's why - - the wireless

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2   service free. In term of the - - for locally

3   economic, not only we have a better workforce,

4   because they can come in ferry and - - people

5   start getting to the ferry terminal, they be able

6   to check email, check what happened and

7   reschedule, upload, whether or not they have

8   changed scheduled meeting, before they reach

9   office. They even have print out proposals, for

10   the patients can - - from the, from, while they're

11   riding a ferry. Then they can - - direct in

12   office. Beside the productivity for the local

13   companies, and they certainly can advertise their

14   local product and service, and attract, attract

15   tourism to Staten Island. And there's the least

16   that can go wrong.

17   MALE VOICE: Do you have some

18   sense, first of all thank you for your wonderful

19   testimony. Do you have some sense of how many

20   parks or other public spaces in Staten Island are

21   wireless, if any?

22   ZHANGYONG ZHANG: I heard, I think

23   there's, we have one member from the pilot of the,

24   the, what do you call, the New York State Wireless

25   Project. And I located a - - foundation, I think

2   they're Staten Island - - , but I don't know

3   whether or not it was a chapter, or is, and the

4   mention of the website on the, on the New York,

5   New York City Wireless website, - - on Staten

6   Island - - .

7   MALE VOICE: Thank you very much,

8   Dr. Zhang.

9   ZHANGYONG ZHANG: Thank you.

10   MALE VOICE: I'd now like to call

11   Angela D'Aiuto, from the Downtown Staten Island

12   Council.

13   ANGELA D'AIUTO: Good morning. I

14   do have a - - . The Downtown Staten Island

15   Council, we are a not-for-profit organization,

16   community development organization, dedicated to

17   the continued revitalization of the downtown

18   Staten Island community. Specifically focusing on

19   business attraction, the Bay Street Corridor,

20   community stabilization, programs that include

21   overall quality of life for residents and

22   businesses alike, in the communities of St.

23   George, Tompkinsville, Stapleton, and Clifton area

24   of Staten Island, so the north shore. Broadband

25   technology is beneficial in many ways. Basically

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2   as a not-for-profit organization, the Downtown

3   Staten Island Council utilizes broadband

4   technology. It also is beneficial for our

5   members, which are, many are small and medium

6   sized business owners, entrepreneurs. We also

7   deal with the community, with community services

8   we provide, so the access and, the access to the

9   internet, broadband technology, improves that

10   access for our residents that live and work in the

11   community. With our current economic conditions,

12   broadband technology actually allows for

13   businesses and individuals, families, to save

14   money in many ways. As a not-for-profit, we can

15   be more efficient as a small business owner. You

16   can also be more efficient, and we see that in

17   various ways. One thing is by broadband

18   technology, you're able to download and transmit

19   files more efficiently. You're able to market

20   your programs more efficiently. You can save on

21   labor, postage and printing, using e-blasts,

22   emails just sending out public PR pieces, videos

23   on your website. Things like that. So, the small

24   businesses, entrepreneurs we deal with, are using

25   that more and more. And broadband allows us,

2   allows them to do that. Yes.

3   MALE VOICE: Just one minute left.

4   ANGELA D'AIUTO: Oh, sorry. Okay,

5   one thing I do want to mention is, regard to

6   economic development, we see wi-fi creating, we

7   recommend, recommend creating wi-fi zones that we

8   see it would be a wonderful economic development

9   benefit, getting people to reinvent and utilize

10   town centers. For example, we have the St. George

11   Library, and you can utilize wi-fi right outside

12   of the library. We would love to see wi-fi in the

13   surrounding areas, planned green space with the

14   federal courthouse in St. George. For example, in

15   Stapleton, we have a newly renovated park, and

16   again, we have a library right across the street.

17   I haven't tested if you can actually get wi-fi in

18   that particular park, but definitely having that

19   as a way to enhance economic development,

20   attracting businesses, attracting, allowing for

21   the use of public space for the entire community,

22   wi-fi can really help with that, and broadband

23   technology is a wonderful tool in that.

24   MALE VOICE: Thank you. Questions

25   for Ms. D'Aiuto?

2   PANELIST: Thank you. Couple

3   things. Number one, your business community, has

4   there been problems getting access for them?

5   ANGELA D'AIUTO: You know what? We

6   have not done a real survey on that. We, we can

7   get back to you on that, but we haven't done a, a

8   real sur--We know that, just changing over for

9   ourselves, there's glitches in just changing over

10   from our own experience, you know, to using

11   broadband. Just the set up and the--.

12   PANELIST: You have a business - -

13   in Staten Island, several commercial strips.

14   ANGELA D'AIUTO: Yes.

15   PANELIST: Have there ever been any

16   special developments sponsoring wi-fi?

17   ANGELA D'AIUTO: In our particular

18   area, we don't. West Layton does have one, so I'm

19   not, again, I'm not, I don't know if anyone's here

20   from West Layton local development corporation,

21   they'd probably be able to answer that. I think

22   we'd be open to that, absolutely, even if we're

23   not a member of business improvement district,

24   because we have about over 200 members that are

25   active business owners in our area. So I think

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2   it's something we'd be open to.

3   PANELIST: Only because there are

4   some funds coming down now from the federal

5   government, where there, if there is a match, you

6   could provide that.

7   ANGELA D'AIUTO: Okay. Great.

8   PANELIST: It's the current - - .

9   ANGELA D'AIUTO: Great.

10   PANELIST: - - these questions.

11   Thank you.

12   ANGELA D'AIUTO: Thank you.

13   PANELIST: I, first I want to say

14   that you're doing a great job. I'm a resident of

15   Staten Island for 30 years, and then there's a

16   noticeable difference in that community over the

17   last few years. It's really making a big

18   difference. So, I wanted to throw that out. But

19   I was just curious to know, it seems as though the

20   businesses that are working with you, clearly

21   they're, there's, they're recognizing the

22   advantage to, to having broadband. When they come

23   to you, do you find that, that that's something

24   you have to sort of sell to them, or is it

25   something that generally small businesses,

2   particularly in that area, are asking for? That

3   they realize they can get when they come in the

4   door?

5   ANGELA D'AIUTO: I think, I think

6   the St. George/Stapleton community tends to

7   attract a lot of entrepreneurs, so we have a lot

8   of savvy, more, I guess, also a lot of small

9   business owners are more educated, younger. So I

10 think the age group, they're more open to that

11 than an older, you know, older more traditional

12 businesses, even, so. But we are in the process

13 actually of cre--of adding a social networking

14 aspect to our website. So, we hope to lead by

15 example and, and share information with the

16 businesses, to really use as many tools as

17 possible to, you know, get your services, your,

18 you know, programs out there. So.

19   MALE VOICE: You mentioned the

20 library and the park. That's an ongoing problem.

21 We tried some years ago to get the libraries to

22 kind of be a center, that could then broadcast,

23 you know, web, and free wireless into the park.

24 But it turns out the libraries have E-RATE money,

25 from the federal government. And if we, we, in

2   the past, and we sort of messed with the E-RATE,

3   and the libraries could be hurt economically. So

4   that's something that we're trying to look at, but

5   I'm just telling you, you're on the right track.

6   We got stuck, but maybe we could work on it in the

7   near future, 'cause it's something that's

8   important. But have you worked with other

9   businesses to try to get free wi-fi in the parks?

10   Has there been that effort? And would that be

11   helpful to you?

12   ANGELA D'AIUTO: It would be

13   helpful. We haven't done that, but in

14   Tompkinsville, we have a newly renovated park,

15   Tompkinsville Park, and in Stapleton, Tappan Park.

16   So, the fact that we have these two, you know,

17   beautifully renovated parks with wonderful seating

18   and, and two, you know, the library in Stapleton's

19   right across the way. It's a no-brainer, it's

20   just a matter of, you know, collaboration and

21   getting it done. So.

22   MALE VOICE: Thank you, Ms.

23   D'Aiuto.

24   ANGELA D'AIUTO: Thank you.

25   MALE VOICE: I'd next like to call

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2   Diatri Sudatsanat [phonetic] who's a student here

3   at CSI.

4   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: Good afternoon.

5   I want to begin by saying that broadband is truly

6   important to my life. In my feeling, it's more of

7   a necessity than a comfort, because in school

8   we're expected to logon to blackboard, which is

9   site, which can take hours to go over, because the

10   amount of people who log on without a high speed

11   internet server. And when broadband is readily

12   available at campus, and at homes for students, it

13   would enable us to perform better in school. And

14   there would be more blackboard or hybrid classes,

15   are becoming more popular in CSI. Last year, I

16   had to take one of my first hybrid classes. - -

17   biweekly, we met once in class and the other day

18   we're, we're expected to log onto blackboard, and

19   communicate on the discussion board. And since

20   many people are logging on at the same time, it

21   can delay your response, and delay your submitting

22   of papers and other--yeah. It would delay it

23   tremendously. But if we had broadband at home and

24   at school, we'd be able to learn more efficiently

25   and teachers now expect for us to do a great

2   amount of research. And we have, and it's readily

3   available at our fingertips online, all you have

4   to do is log on. And if we had that access, I'm

5   sure that they'll be able to compete in a

6   classroom setting more efficiently.

7   MALE VOICE: Thank you. Questions

8   for Ms. Sudatsanat? Mr. Chair. Tom.

9   TOMÁS MORALES: Did you go to

10   school, high school here in Staten Island?

11   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: Yes, I did. -

12   - High School.

13   TOMÁS MORALES: And how long ago

14   was that?

15   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: Two years ago.

16   TOMÁS MORALES: Could you let us

17   know what facilities were available to you at your

18   high school?

19   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: We had

20   computers in the library, not in the classrooms,

21   which I think we should have computers in every

22   classroom. And that's it. If you wanted to work

23   on the computers, - - assignments or something, we

24   had to go to school library during our lunch

25   hours.

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2   CHAIRMAN DUNN: Right. And at

3 home?

4   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: At home, I had

5 broadband, but it's--not everyone does, and it'd

6 be, it puts me at an unfair advantage, and I think

7 everyone should have the right to, to have

8 broadband, for them to get their work done.

9   CHAIRMAN DUNN: And what, what do

10 the - - ?

11   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: I'm not sure.

12   CHAIRMAN DUNN: You're not sure.

13   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: [laughs]

14   CHAIRMAN DUNN: But - - , I know

15 that this is just a guess on your part, but how

16 many, how many of your fellow students, in college

17 here, have it at home?

18   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: I personally

19 know of five of my friends who do not even have a

20 computer at their homes, let alone broadband. So

21 it's - -

22   CHAIRMAN DUNN: Thank you.

23   PANELIST: I'm interested in

24 knowing your friends, do they have cell phones?

25   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: Yes.

1

2   PANELIST: How do they use them?

3   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: Their parents

4   provide - -

5   PANELIST: Excuse me?

6   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: So their

7   parents can provide cell phones so they can keep

8   in touch with them. When they find cell phones

9   more of a necessity than for them to do

10   schoolwork. So the students want the broadband to

11   do schoolwork, but it's, cell phones more of a

12   safety issue, in my opinion.

13   PANELIST: Do they, do they use it

14   for text messaging?

15   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: No.

16   PANELIST: No, they don't text

17   message? So, it's, cell, the cell phone is not a

18   device that is being used to, to--

19   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: It's just

20   communication with the cell phone, as for the

21   parents to keep in touch--

22   PANELIST: Only, only for that.

23   DIATRI SUDATSANAT: Right.

24   PANELIST: Okay, thank you.

25   MALE VOICE: Other questions?

1

2   Thank you very much. And we'll try to keep the

3   portal up for the beginning of classes next year.

4   [laughter] I'd next like to call Bea Victor, from

5   Senior Net.

6   BEA VICTOR: I have to tell you

7   from the beginning that I have been led down the

8   wrong road. I was told that I could have up to

9   five minutes to speak. And I called up to make

10   sure. So you're three minute thing is going to be

11   a little of a problem for me. I'll do the best I

12   can.

13   MALE VOICE: We, we trust your

14   adaptive capacities. [laughter]

15   BEA VICTOR: Yeah. Good luck.

16   [laughter] And I was also told that you were

17   asking us to testify as to our personal

18   experiences. So that's what I've prepared for

19   you. So, okay. In 1993, as a result of a grant

20   given to the JCC, Dr. Steven Froman [phonetic],

21   Stan Finkelstein and me, were able to become one

22   of the learning centers of an international

23   program called Senior Net. The two gentlemen

24   unfortunately have passed away, and I have however

25   continued to enjoy the privilege of being part of

this wonderful program. We volunteer seniors have

the privilege of being able to provide classes to

those 50 plus, that include in different sessions,

a variety of subjects. In this particular

session, we start with beginners, we go into

beginners to advanced, we go into internet, we go

to Photoshop, we have had Excel, Quicken and more.

And everybody who teaches these programs are

seniors and we teach only to seniors, which is why

in every single class I can tell you that the

subject of conversation is, "My husband, my son,

my grandson, my granddaughter and everybody else

couldn't teach me, they talk too fast, I don't

know what they're talking about, I gave up." They

come in scared to death. And it's been one of our

privileges and I'll tell you that there are people

in this audience who have become teachers, who've

become assistants, who have become technicians,

and who have worked with us all these years. So

it's been very exciting. I going to skip as much

as I can, but you're going to miss a lot.

[laughter] Very valuable information. I just

want to tell you what it is then to me. I'm going

to mention my age, simply so that you will realize

that this is something that older people can do.

I'm 87. And I started to teach, I learned how to

do computers, I think I took a class here at

college. One class. And I was dragged, screaming

and crying, into teaching other seniors. It has

been a learning experience for me, and it has been

a learning experience for every one of the--I wish

all of those, you from Senior Net would stand up,

so they can see some of you here. These are our

people [applause] - - . You notice the hair is

not yellow or brown, it's white and gray.

[laughter] Anyhow. But this is my personal

experience. I started writing a column for the

Staten Island Advance in 1987. I would use a

typewriter to prepare the articles, and then

sometimes at 11:00 at night, drive down to the

paper's building to deliver it. I now simply type

my column on the computer, and with a click or

two, send it to the paper in a moment. All cards,

congratulatory or others, are prepared on my

computer. I can reach my children and my friends

so easily. I have people in Israel, I have people

down in Texas. All I have to do is click, point

and click. And I tell you this because there are

a lot of us, younger than me, older than 50, who

never saw a computer, they're scared to death of

it. We at Senior Net have talked about the

possibility of home teaching, but we have been

stopped because of the fact that there is not

broadband in all of these places all over this--

And we would like to continue to do this. The

JCC, since we've opened the new building, has a

wonderful computer center. But there are only

twelve seats in it. We would like to see that

expanded. We would like to be able to teach more,

we would like to get more seniors comfortable.

And I would like to piggyback on the doctor who

spoke. Because it would be absolutely wonderful

for those of us who live at home, alone, who have

all these senior medical illnesses that come

along, to be able to get on a computer, to be able

to reach a physician. Not have to wait six weeks

to see a doctor, or maybe go into the doctor's

office and have that ten minute period that we're

allowed these days, to talk to the general

practitioner. It would be marvelous if we could

teach all the older people not to be afraid of

these computers. Let's see. In 1987, was the

year that I began to take classes, and I started

the Senior Olympics at Staten Island, the same

year, and ran it for 19 years. There's no way I

could've managed that without the computer. No

way at all. I've collected humor since 1987. And

the ease of collecting has increased markedly

through the convenience of my computer, and I

continue to have the pleasure of being able to

share it with many other senior organizations.

Keeps me active. Being on that computer has given

me the ability to stay healthy, to keep my mind

active, and to be able to be an active person in

this community, not to worry my children, they

don't have to call me up every day to see, "Are

you okay, mom? Is everything alright?" I live

alone. I've been a widow since 1977. And I would

like to tell you that more and more and more

seniors are coming to Staten Island, more and more

seniors are going to be with us. They need to

have this way of communication. Thank you very

much. [applause]

                    MALE VOICE: Thank you, Ms. Victor.

That did go to five minutes, and it was worth

every single second. [laughter]

1

2   BEA VICTOR: Well, thank you.

3   MALE VOICE: - - better example of

4   broadband and it's fine effects. Are there

5   questions for Ms. Victor?

6   PANELIST: I'm curious, how much of

7   what seniors are trained to use computers to use

8   the internet?

9   BEA VICTOR: I'm sorry--

10   PANELIST: How much--

11   BEA VICTOR: I'm also a little hard

12   of hearing.

13   PANELIST: Okay. The seniors that

14   you train to use computers and the internet, how

15   much of what they're doing online is talking to

16   each other, rather than talking to experts, say

17   like doctors or other kinds of professionals? I

18   mean, is it a valuable peer support tool, too?

19   BEA VICTOR: Any one of you guys

20   want to answer that? A lot of it. A lot of it.

21   As a matter of fact, when they come into our

22   classes, the first thing they say is, "When do we

23   learn about the email? When do we learn about

24   internet?" That's the prime thing they want to

25   know. Am I correct?

2   AUDIENCE: Yes, yes.

3   PANELIST: Thank you. Interesting

4   presentation, said a lot there. Trying to

5   understand, if you were to rank what you think are

6   the barriers to seniors using, on Staten Island,

7   using internet and broadband, is it the fear of

8   the computer? Is it the access to broadband? Or

9   is it just the lack of people to teach them how to

10   do this? How would you rank those?

11   BEA VICTOR: I think the fear is

12   number one. I have no idea about the inability to

13   have broadband, that's something I learned about.

14   What was the third thing?

15   PANELIST: Whether or not it's just

16   the inability to understand how to access a

17   computer.

18   BEA VICTOR: Well, the fear goes

19   along with the inability--I mean, they tell us

20   that they bring their computer, that somebody

21   gives them a computer for Christmas, and it's

22   still in the box two years later. So--And you--

23   PANELIST: So, so it's not, it's

24   not been the unavailability of broadband service

25   that has been--

2   BEA VICTOR: I don't know. I don't

3   know how much that is. Mel?

4   MEL BOXNER: Yeah, I just want to

5   say, I think pricing is the biggest barrier for

6   all broadband. Many of these seniors are on fixed

7   incomes, they don't even consider it a priority.

8   Dialogue is satisfactory to them. But if pricing

9   came down, they, they would go toward broadband.

10   MALE VOICE: Excuse me, sir, would

11   you just identify yourself for the record?

12   MEL BOXNER: Mel Boxner.

13   MALE VOICE: Thank you, sir.

14   MEL BOXNER: Thank you.

15   MALE VOICE: Other questions.

16   PANELIST: Mr. Boxner, with regards

17   to your statement, you know, you talk about

18   affordability. What about the affordability of

19   buying a computer? Then we talk about the

20   affordability of the monthly service charge for

21   broadband service.

22   BEA VICTOR: That has to be a

23   factor, too. That has to be a factor, too. As a

24   matter of fact, one of the things that we do, did

25   for a number of years that's kind of slowed down

2 now, is we offered the social service agencies

3 that serve seniors the opportunity to send their

4 volunteers to come to our classes, so they could

5 learn to use the computer in the agencies' offices

6 where they're volunteering. But affordability,

7 I'm sure is, is a big factor.

8   PANELIST: Yes, I'm impressed with

9 your physical and mental condition. I hope that--

10   BEA VICTOR: I thank you. I think

11 it's the genes. [laughter]

12   PANELIST: I hope we all can look

13 like you when we get to 87, if we get there.

14   BEA VICTOR: Oh.

15   PANELIST: You mentioned, and I

16 think the, Dr. Volpe also alluded to, at least

17 he's related, associated with mental health. When

18 you mention having access as one way, I don't know

19 if you mentioned, but he mentioned, as one way

20 that seniors can really improve their quality of

21 life. We have seen, in my organization, right now

22 is involved with the digital transition. And

23 we're being provided emergency installations in

24 that area, in a number of parts of the country,

25 and in Puerto Rico a great deal. And we're

1

2   finding out that, just having the person to go

3   there, and just, we're talking about low

4   technology, the, the digital television, is a, is

5   almost like a life saver for seniors that we

6   visit. And you, you know, I'm curious to find out

7   what is your perspective of being able not only to

8   have access, but also to enable people in their

9   own homes to assist them, to, to have that access.

10 You mentioned that you have centers for people can

11 come in, and, and that's very important. We have

12 heard testimony in a number of areas that having

13 these centers is very important, very critical,

14 especially people to have access. But to what

15 extent being able to have that ability to go to

16 the home and assist them, is important for your

17 members.

18   BEA VICTOR: Well, I imagine it

19 would be terrible--I'm a nurse by profession. And

20 so, I can see that being able to communicate on a

21 one-to-one basis, maybe more than once a day if

22 you don't understand something. Or maybe the

23 diabetes, diabetes is kicking up, or the blood

24 pressure's going up, would be invaluable.

25 Absolutely invaluable.

2   PANELIST: I was, I was referring

3   more to people that do not have access now, for

4   different reasons. You know, how, how important

5   will be to enable them? In other words, to make

6   extra efforts to make sure that those people get

7   the access, that they have the technology in their

8   homes; because some of them might not be able to

9   go to the centers. How important, what percentage

10   of your population are home bound that having this

11   kind of service will help them?

12   BEA VICTOR: I'm afraid I don't

13   know the answer. Does any of you?

14   FRANK: I actually can speak from

15   my own experience. I have elderly parents, and

16   one of the things that I realize is that

17   communication was very difficult with them, when

18   they were in Florida every year. So, one of the

19   things was development of a optical scanning fax,

20   if you will, to email system. You know, they were

21   computer-phobic completely. So, this was a

22   natural progression, easing them into broadband

23   and communicating with email.

24   MALE VOICE: Enter your name, sir.

25   FRANK: Frank - - . My company is

1

2   in the city. And this is, you know, to the point

3   of, you know, email and broadband for the elderly.

4   This changed their lives dramatically. I mean,

5   they now came from the Stone Age into the 21st

6   Century. And through this broadband - - , can now

7   send prescriptions to us or proposals for work

8   that are being done in their house where they

9   might be getting ripped off, where we would never

10 see. So, now, it takes that distance between here

11 and Florida [clap] and shrinks it to real time.

12 And I think, you know, making an extra effort to

13 bring broadband to the elderly is extremely

14 important. Because I think that's going to make

15 their lives easier, as well as ours, you know,

16 especially if you have elderly parents.

17   MALE VOICE: This is a very

18 important topic, I see. Couple of hands up in the

19 room but we really can't turn this into an open

20 discussion right now. So what I'd like to do is

21 to ask you if you would like to provide testimony,

22 to fill out a card and get in the queue and then

23 we will, we will address that testimony when we

24 can. Are there other questions for Ms. Victor?

25 Thank you very much.

2   BEA VICTOR: Thank you very much.

3   MALE VOICE: And thank you for the

4   wonderful work that you do with Senior Net. And

5   thank you Senior Net for turning out in such

6   force. [applause] I'd next like to call Kim

7   Faulcon, from Staten Island University Hospital.

8   KIM FAULCON: Hi, good morning. My

9   name is Kim Faulcon, I'm the Director of

10   Telecommunications for Staten Island University

11   Hospital. Just to let you know a little bit about

12   the hospital, it's a 714 bed tertiary care

13   hospital, located on Staten Island. We had 42,000

14   inpatient discharges in 2008. We had 540,000

15   outpatient visits in 2008. And we had 98,000

16   emergency room visits in 2008. We have multiple

17   sites on Staten Island, and we have multiple sites

18   in Brooklyn. We also have a regional burn unit.

19   The hospital has a gigabit connectivity amongst

20   its own campus, so we don't rely, or don't need to

21   rely on broadband, like a smaller office would.

22   However, we have a number of physician offices and

23   other smaller branch offices that need to connect

24   to our datacenter via broadband. Some of the

25   things that we're doing at the hospital include,

and I heard it spoken about at the federal level

is the electronic medical record for inpatient and

outpatient clinics; hopefully in probably 2010 or

even later this year, we'll see e-prescribing

begin to take hold. There's also patient health

surveys that could happen from the home, if a

patient had broadband at home, they could be able

to fill out a survey that we could see online.

EMR access, or electronic medical record access at

physician practices, is something we like to see.

And we also have a number of businesses, or

business partners, that do things like Aramark is

our cafeteria partner. They, you know, provide

food services. Owens and Minor is a, is a group

that provides medical supplies. We have the

Visiting Nurse Association, they're on campus, as

well as in their own offices. And the, and we're

actually starting a credit union that's coming up

soon. Just going to skip here. One of the

barriers we see to broadband is clearly the cost.

That overhead is a necessary evil. And when you

talk to a lot of physician practices, physician

practices have to pay the business rate, and not

even the home rate, and then however that

physician exists, and basically one is a house

that's converted to an office. So, seems like

it's a bit of an unfair thing to charge this $80

business rate for broadband, versus a $50 other

homeowner type rate. We'd like to see broadband

really expanded. It's how the hospital does

business with a lot of people. And it's a good

way to have connectivity to the hospital.

MALE VOICE: Thank you, Mr.

Faulcon. For you and for Ms. Victor, and for

anybody else, if you have prepared remarks, please

give them to the Sergeant-at-Arms and we will be

able to distribute those to the committee.

Questions for Mr. Faulcon?

CHAIRPERSON BREWER: Thank you very

much. One question I have is, what is the status

of medical records now, in terms of the number,

perhaps, or how pervasive is it in Staten Island?

And are you getting some assistance now, in terms

of funding for, for electronic health records? Or

is that something that you have to pay for

yourself? Are there federal grants? Is the City

helping you? I know there's a lot of push to try

to collaborate with doctors' offices, community

health centers, and hospitals, but I just don't

know how effective it is in Staten Island.

KIM FAULCON: I'm going to answer

that to the best of my ability. I'm not sure of

the, the federal dollars or state dollars that

are, are, you know, allotted to us for that type

of project. I do know that the hospital itself

has its own capital funds for a project like that,

and that is actually an ongoing project which is,

if I'm not mistaken, supposed to be implemented

this year. So, we're on our way to an electronic

medical record, and that will be a real thing,

come the end of this year, or early next year.

FEMALE VOICE: - - Staten Island.

We actually got some help. We got some help with

- - and they helped subsidize some of the costs

associated with the critical application and

provided an entry system that we currently

implement - - . We do have electronic medical

record right now that collects information related

to the patients--lab, radiology, pharmacy, data--

and they have - - demographics as well. And a

physician are clinical provider can go one place

and get all of that information. We plan to do in

2   the future is that we'll expand out with doctors

3   and actually place orders. There'll be groups

4   sets, there'll be order sets, so that when they

5   actually place an order, they'll be alert to know

6   that they should do this, they shouldn't do this.

7   There'll be clinical references availability

8   through broadband, through the internet, so they

9   can actually pull up information to find out if

10   they should have drugs or treatment plans or

11   whatever. So, we're in the process of that, and

12   some of that is subsidized in - - .

13   MALE VOICE: Thank you. Further

14   questions? Thank you, Mr. Faulcon. I'd now like

15   to call Joey Cardona from the Seamens Family and

16   Children's Society.

17   JOEY CARDONA: Hello. I'm Joe

18   Cardona of the Seamen's Society. We are a foster

19   care, daycare provider, type of agency. I work in

20   the IT department, I'm the director of IT, I work

21   along with Jim - - here present, and our CEO,

22   Nancy Vomero, is present with us as well. We're a

23   non-profit, and as a non-profit, there's really

24   little and sometimes no funding available for the

25   latest technology. In some corporations, the

board members, I mean not the board members, but

administration, and even the IT guys, and so

forth, they have their Blackberry phones and they

can text, they can go back and forth. We really

don't have that. We don't have the funding for

that, but that's understandable. Because Jim and

I are quite knowledgeable in the electronics and

in the hardware end of it, we're able to make ends

meet, we're able to make things work, even having

the type of equipment that we do have. Some of

our servers are Pentium IIIs. Many of you may not

understand what a Pentium III is, but it's old

technology. Pentium IV is considered old today,

as well, and we're operating under those

conditions. We--some, as far as broadband, we do

have what's considered, what called a T1 line,

several T1 lines and PRIs, for our phone system,

but the cost of that for some is close to $1000

per line. We are a business, so we can't afford

to take risks and depend solely on the broadband,

because as many of you know, sometimes they're

down for maintenance and who knows what happens,

but now you have no connection for an hour or two,

and we can't afford that. And even senior

citizens, that was mentioned, if, if we had some

sort of broadband, and we didn't have someone on

hand who can handle everything, there's tech

support that one would require. And you know if

you have a problem with your machine, you call

Dell or Compaq, they want you to pay $65. Or

$200, just to get that help. But we had funding

for a lab, and it was able to house pretty much

about 14 to 16 students, and we lost those

fundings, but it's not only the need of the

broadband, we're in need of funding that would

help train these students. Because it's one thing

to provide broadband for someone, but the other

thing is, who's going to train the person how to

use the computer? Who's going to make sure that

things are secure? Well, you have identity theft,

and you have other people trying and wasting time,

trying to hack into your personal data. So, even

though we wish that we could get some sort of

funding, but can't stop with funding just to

provide the bandwidth, but also to provide a means

to train those who are going to be using these

computers. And to explain to them how important

it is not to give secure information. Much of us,

many of us, probably receive emails saying, "Click

here."

MALE VOICE: Mr. Cardona, we're out

of time, so if you could just take a couple of

seconds to wrap up, please.

JOEY CARDONA: Okay, and you, you

click here because you sent out packages, so far

there's all your information, you've entered it

and it's gone. So, we are in dire need of

fundings that would help provide for--We have

community programs, but not enough of them that

would provide a means where these kids can come

after school, and, and others, and make use of

these computers and get sufficient training.

MALE VOICE: Okay, thank you for

your testimony. Are there questions for Mr.

Cardona? Yes.

PANELIST: You mentioned that you

paid a considerable monthly premium for T1 service

because you have critical service system - -

connected to the internet. I think that this may

be the first that we've heard that from a

community based, community service organizations,

at any of our hearings. And it's interesting

1

2   because telecom reliability, I believe the number

3   one priority for infrastructure in the 2005

4   telecom plan, released by the City's Economic

5   Development Corporation, that was mainly focused

6   on financial services and other large

7   corporations. So I'm curious, what are some of

8   the services that you, you guys need absolute 24/7

9   reliability for?

10   JOEY CARDONA: We have three

11   locations, two are mobile offices, and ours

12   located at 50 Bay Street is just a walk from the

13   Ferry. We, we have two PRI lines with Verizon,

14   MCI/Verizon Business now. And therefore our long

15   distant calls and calls to the community, there

16   are a number of case workers on hand, and they're

17   constantly having to be in touch with the foster

18   parents, or with other agencies. And so forth,

19   that's as far as the phone, we have 800 numbers

20   that we provide to these parents, as well. And we

21   have the internet line, which is the T1 dedicated

22   line, and we have the frame relay that goes

23   between the mobile offices to us. We have, as I

24   mentioned, voice over IP, so you know, the offices

25   come through us, and they access our PRIs, our,

2   you know, numbers, to make the calls.

3   MALE VOICE: Other questions.

4   Thank you, Mr. Cardona. I'd now like to call Dan

5   Stevens, of Stevens Enterprises.

6   DAN STEVENS: Hi, my name is Dan

7   Stevens, from Stevens Enterprises, and I think my

8   testimony's just going to be generic more both on

9   the business owner side, and on the consumer side,

10   'cause I think that's pretty relatable to

11   everybody. I think that the internet is kind of

12   like a rubber band, that once it's stretched, it

13   doesn't go back to its, its original position, and

14   I think people have been using the internet from

15   dial up to broadband feel that once you get to a

16   certain point, you can't go back, and you

17   shouldn't go back. And I do think that the

18   technology is out there to provide everybody with

19   broadband right now. I don't think it's a matter

20   of being able to provide it, I think it's a matter

21   of not wanting to provide it yet, for whatever

22   reason it is. I own an ecommerce business, it's a

23   private ecommerce franchise business, it's an

24   accredited business, it spans around the United

25   States. And we have other franchise owners that

1

2   are around the United States. Our servers and our

3   site is run by Microsoft, IBM, Intel and Compaq,

4   and you can't get better than that. However, as

5   good as that is, it's a matter of people being

6   able to get on this site, and have good security,

7   and have fast, convenient, positive experience on

8   the internet. And I think that's one of the

9   biggest things now, when you don't have broadband,

10   it gets to be very frustrating. Today, nobody has

11   time anymore, everybody wants to get on, do what

12   they have to do, and get off. And at this point,

13   doing business where people cannot have a positive

14   experience because of the frustrations that they

15   have because they don't have broadband, causes

16   business to lose money. Where the opposite

17   happens when people do have a positive experience,

18   can get on, get downloaded items, what they need,

19   shop, do what they need, and be a consumer and

20   have a positive experience. It means going on

21   again and again, which means convenience for them,

22   and it means revenue for the business owner. So,

23   I think just in general, again, I, you know,

24   today, about every seven seconds, somebody gets on

25   the internet for the very first time. Very first

2   time. Two years ago it was eleven seconds. So

3   we're in a big push for people to get on the

4   internet. And I do believe that the technology is

5   there, everything's there, we just have to get

6   with the people who are in power to make this

7   happen at a reasonable rate for everybody to have

8   the ability to make the internet continue to go

9   forward in a very positive and secure way. Thank

10   you.

11   MALE VOICE: Thank you, sir.

12   Questions for Mr. Stevens. Thank you very much.

13   DAN STEVENS: Thank you.

14   MALE VOICE: I would now like to

15   call Mark Laperry [phonetic] who I understand is a

16   student and New York High School. We're

17   definitely going to hold you to three minutes

18   because we want you to get back to class.

19   [laughter]

20   MARK LAPERRY: Thank you. First, I

21   have to apologize for my appearance, because an

22   hour before this I had no intentions of

23   testifying. But my name is Mark Laperry, I'm a

24   student at New York High School. Upon realizing

25   that, to my knowledge, that I'm the only high

1

2   school represented here, I believe I had to

3   scribble this up really quick to give you guys a

4   fair testimony. I believe that broadband schools,

5   broadband in schools would help very

6   significantly. Currently, New York has more

7   typical low speed internet. Connection problems

8   constantly restrict student teachers, and

9   teachers, from accessing the internet. Guidance

10   counselors cannot access program websites to

11   complete students progress reports, or to print

12   the transcript for a program. Teachers can

13   include online homework assignments on their

14   websites. Interactive websites can also help

15   educate students. Previous regents test exams, as

16   well as test prac can be accessed from the school

17   internet. Broadband access in the school library

18   would benefit students to help research reports,

19   for students who don't have a computer at home, or

20   cannot get to a library. New York has three

21   computer labs, and numerous laptop computers that

22   are frequently shared throughout the school.

23   Pledge group chats outside the school, such it's

24   just like an online chat, could also fare as well,

25   as an online study group, so to speak. Thank you.

2   MALE VOICE: Thanks very much.

3   Questions for Mr. Laperry? - - [crosstalk]

4   PANELIST: Yes, how many students

5   in your school have access to broadband, and

6   outside your school in your estimation?

7   MARK LAPERRY: New York has about

8   2500 students total. And I'd have to say 60 to 75

9   percent of them have an internet access outside

10   school. But that's only with a numerous, numerous

11   amounts of problems. If we had access in the

12   schools, it would make students' lives a lot

13   easier, it would help increase grades, which would

14   increase recognition for schools throughout the

15   city.

16   PANELIST: What are the indications

17   that you see in the school? Can you very quickly

18   describe for me how many, how many, is there

19   computer--are there not computers in every

20   classroom, that the student have access to? Or

21   are they in labs?

22   MARK LAPERRY: Only there, only

23   three computer labs students have access to.

24   Teachers have their own computers in numerous

25   classrooms, but classroom laptops that have class

1

2   sets with the smart board and etc., are circulated

3   throughout the entire school building for every

4   teacher to get fair usage at the computer when

5   they need it.

6   PANELIST: About 35 percent that

7   does not have access, in your estimation, how

8   could they get access outside, outside?

9   MARK LAPERRY: Quite simply, they

10   don't. Just, this is the only way that they would

11   be able to get this access.

12   PANELIST: Yeah, just quick

13   question. I'm not familiar with the high school,

14   the New York City School?

15   MARK LAPERRY: Yes. It's a New

16   York City public school, yes.

17   PANELIST: And does not have

18   broadband access.

19   MARK LAPERRY: As far as I know, as

20   far as I know, yes. No access.

21   PANELIST: You have three labs and

22   no broadband.

23   MARK LAPERRY: We have a typical

24   low speed internet connection, but it's always,

25   it's constantly down, which consistently prevents

2   teachers and these guidance counselors from

3   accessing student records and such.

4   PANELIST: And the school has

5   somebody who's in charge of IT technology?

6   MARK LAPERRY: We do, but it always

7   runs through HSST, and ATS, the school programming

8   systems that are out in the City that control

9   everything, and it's out of our control if the

10   internet's down.

11   PANELIST: Okay.

12   MALE VOICE: You are an awesome

13   student. [laughter] [applause] My question is,

14   for those students who do not, first of all, we'll

15   work on your school, we'll figure out something.

16   So, just by being here, we will work on that.

17   MARK LAPERRY: Thank you.

18   MALE VOICE: The second issue is,

19   so for those individuals picking up on the

20   previous question, who do not have access at home,

21   obviously you can't be in school all the time, and

22   the access isn't great. Do they use libraries?

23   Do they go to friends' houses? 'Cause somehow you

24   have to do your homework, and somehow you have to

25   perhaps apply for the colleges, and you can't do

2   all of it. I know it's a challenge, but are there

3   other places that people go? Or do you think that

4   you should have more access to the libraries or

5   community technology centers, etc.?

6   MARK LAPERRY: I believe that the

7   community technology centers, as well as the

8   libraries, would help students a lot with this.

9   Honestly, I cannot tell you how many students come

10   in, "Miss, I did not hand in my project, I

11   couldn't type it up on the computer. I didn't

12   have internet connection, I couldn't do the

13   research." So it's a big problem.

14   PANELIST: How did you know about

15   the hearing today?

16   MARK LAPERRY: We actually received

17   an, the principal, Deirdre DeAngelis, received a,

18   an email, I suppose, and we were, me and my friend

19   Vanna were suggested to attend this morning.

20   PANELIST: Okay. Were you not on

21   the email system, was it sent you by email, or

22   were you approached?

23   MARK LAPERRY: It was sent to the

24   principal via email, and she approached me and

25   Vanna.

2   PANELIST: Thank you for coming.

3   MARK LAPERRY: Thank you.

4   MALE VOICE: Thank you, Principal

5   DeAngelis chose very well. [laughter]

6   MARK LAPERRY: Thank you.

7   [applause]

8   MALE VOICE: I'd now like to call

9   Michael Kress.

10   MICHAEL KRESS: My name is Michael

11   Kress, I'm the Vice President for Technology

12   Systems at the College of Staten Island. Thank

13   you very much for giving me the opportunity to

14   share with you one of the very important projects

15   that we're working on here at the college. We

16   call this project: "Transforming Education

17   Through Ubiquitous 21st Century Networking." The

18   project, the project's purpose is to develop a

19   converged network service and applications

20   platform that will network the campus and the

21   surrounding Staten Island communities for the

22   purpose of enhancing educational instruction and

23   learning not only for traditional students, but

24   also to an expanded group of Staten Islanders. The

25   system will use both broadband and wireless

networks to enable ubiquitous access to the

services and applications. In addition to the

traditional students, the system will benefit

returning veterans, Americans with disabilities,

part-time workers, and persons seeking retraining

for new jobs and advancement. It will reduce the

congestion on the highways and, and travel, and

reduce travel and have other additional benefits.

This initiative will serve as a pilot to the City

University of New York, for the nation and for us

as a whole in providing broadband resources for

educational opportunities to communities, and in

collaboration with institutions of higher

education. Essentially, what our program is doing

is taking advantage of new technologies and

streaming video, in distance learning

technologies, and the like, and coupling those

resources together with the administrative

services that students need on a day-to-day basis.

And providing that in a way that it's seamlessly

accessible on campus and throughout the community.

As you heard Professor Zhang speak earlier about

that very thing, that's another example of where

we feel that's a part of our project. But we're

also looking at bus transportation key corridors,

so that the student can be connected at all times,

to the, to the network. Thank you.

MALE VOICE: You have a minute

left, if you'd like to extend.

MICHAEL KRESS: That's okay.

MALE VOICE: Thank you, sir.

Questions for Mr. Kress.

PANELIST: You indicate that

there's a number of areas and you have been

working in the surrounding communities. Many

other speakers have mentioned funding. Are you

going to unveil a sustainability model in this

project, to address how it can continue?

MICHAEL KRESS: Yes. A good

portion of this project is to, is to identify

partnerships with businesses as well as

governmental agencies to look at a model that has

a cash flow associated with it. Because certainly

we would like it to be free for everybody, I think

everybody always likes free. But I think we, we

acknowledge that there is some overhead that other

companies will have to incur. So, part of our

initiative is to do the research and understanding

1

2   exactly what is the right business model that's

3   affordable for the students that's, that can make

4   a benefit into the community at large, and that

5   really bring that new educational model to a broad

6   spectrum of people. Now there may be people that,

7   that have a harder time handling the costs. For

8   those people, we would have to address it in a

9   very special way. And if you look at CUNY's

10   mission throughout its time, it's never denied an

11   educational opportunity to students for the sake

12   of money. So, I think that we'll work it out, but

13   I think part of our mission I think, if you'll

14   read in my testimony which I submitted, that

15   finding the right business model I think is a

16   good, I think very important first step.

17   MALE VOICE: Other questions.

18   PANELIST: Dr. Kress, I have long

19   admired your work for afar. Thank you for coming.

20   MICHAEL KRESS: Thank you.

21   PANELIST: So, I wanted to

22   understand better how you achieved this ubiquity,

23   if by identifying hotspots that would be connected

24   to your network, right?

25   MICHAEL KRESS: That's correct.

2   For example, the ferry boat is a perfect, perfect

3   example, the corridors for the major bus routes,

4   the mall's now becoming online, that's, there's a

5   hotspot there, that's another step. But it's

6   about targeting the hotspots so that they have the

7   biggest impact in the shortest amount of time.

8   Also, you can target wireless environments in some

9   places which are higher density concentrations,

10   and use models like they did in Philadelphia,

11   where they provide wireless broadband access to an

12   entire apartment house that, that enabled you to

13   do things that you could never do if you had to

14   put all wires in place. So, it's about using

15   strategic planning to approach the problem in an

16   effective way.

17   PANELIST: We've been talking to

18   your - - . [laughter] Good idea, thank you very

19   much.

20   MALE VOICE: Thank you for your

21   testimony. I now want to call Abdulai Bah, from

22   the Community News Productions.

23   ABDULAI BAH: I, thank you so much

24   for allowing me to speak here today. Again, my

25   name is Abdulai Bah. Actually, I happen to be a

former student of CSI, so it's an honor to be here today. And I work for the Community News Production Institute, which is also part of the People's Production House. And I work with many communities, mainly immigrants and low income families. But might not be actually talking a lot about those communities, but instead I will actually talk about myself, regarding the kind of connection I have here on Staten Island, because I live here on Staten Island. I'm a customer of Time Warner Cable, and it's been about four years or so since I subscribed to their service. So I get a, my internet, for example, costs around $50 a month. And I, I recently called up Time Warner Cable and told them that the $50 that I was being charged way too much. And if they were not going to give me a better deal, I was going to switch. So, Time Warner said, "Okay, we are actually going to give you a better deal, and we'll want you to stay with us for twelve more months." I said, "Okay," so they said "We'll offer you $29.99," which is $30 a month. So, the reason why I'm saying this to you, you know, to, I'm saying this to everyone, but obviously to the committee, is to

2   draw the attention to the cost of service.

3   Everyone here, you know, who came before me, had

4   actually, someone mentioned about the cost. If

5   Time Warner Cable is able to offer me the same

6   service that I was being charged for $50 for the

7   past three years, why is it Time Warner Cable

8   can't actually charge me the same $30 now all for

9   even less. So, I think it would be really

10   interesting if you, you're, you know, with the

11   work you do, address that issue. Because, again,

12   not just in the - - community of low income

13   families, everyone, they say they would like to

14   have a service that costs less, you know, at

15   least, if it's not free. Thank you so much.

16   MALE VOICE: Thank you, sir.

17   Questions for Mr. Bah.

18   TOMÁS MORALES: Oh, I don't have a

19   question, but I just have a, a statement, and that

20   statement would be, you know, there is a beauty in

21   competition, and Verizon brought competition, full

22   disclosure when it - - competition to Staten

23   Island, and you will see improved service from

24   Time Warner, and you will see costs going down

25   because now they are no longer a monopoly. As a

1

2   reformed monopolist, telephone company, I know

3   from what I speak. So I'm happy that your rates

4   have gone down, they should go down all over the

5   city, once there is true competition here. And

6   the city of New York. And Mayor Brewer,

7   Councilman Brewer, was one of the, one of the

8   people who was instrumental in bringing

9   competition to the City of New York by allowing

10   Verizon to get a franchise to compete in the City

11   of New York. [applause]

12   MALE VOICE: My question--Tom is

13   being a little generous--my question is, do you

14   live in an area that this, where there is

15   competition? So was that a Time Warner versus

16   FiOS discussion? And then my second question

17   would be, I know you didn't talk specifically

18   about the immigrant community, but I would like

19   you, if you don't mind, just talk a little bit

20   about how broadband could service that community.

21   ABDULAI BAH: First with the first

22   question. Yes, we do have Verizon, that recently

23   started off in, it's FiOS service. But there's a

24   problem with that, actually. Although it's good

25   to have another company offering the same service,

1

2   or even better, but I think the cost remains the

3   same. Because Time, you know, what Verizon is

4   offering, it's on the same price as Time Warner.

5   So, I think regardless of how many companies we

6   have, if there is no policy on how to lower the

7   cost, you know, the issue will still remain the

8   same thing. As for the immigrant community, where

9   I live for example, in the Stapleton area, I, I,

10   for those who know Staten Island, I don't have to

11   tell you, how large the immigrant community is in

12   that area. And I think if people have access to,

13   to broadband, trust me, it can do a lot of stuff

14   for them. One thing, for instance, I think, that

15   would do, is to allow people to be able to call

16   back home, to you know, to stay in touch with

17   their families, or whoever they want to stay in

18   touch with. Because once you have access to

19   broadband internet, you can easily call, you know,

20   using many services, that might be offered, for

21   very cheap rates. For example, Skype, thank you,

22   or you know, many other services. So, this, if

23   you have something like that, access to, you know,

24   to the broadband service, it would definitely

25   being doing a lot for the immigrant community, but

2   also for, you know, everyone that's in the city.

3   MALE VOICE: Okay. Any other

4   questions? Thank you very much, Mr. Bah.

5   ABDULAI BAH: Thank you so much.

6   [applause]

7   MALE VOICE: Did that Skype quote

8   come from Senior Net. [laughter] I would now

9   like to call three people to the microphone, all

10   of them from the New York Public Library: Marisa

11   Parish, Courtney Castellane and Gary Miller.

12   MARISA PARISH: Thank you. I'm

13   sorry. I'm sorry, I hope my time starts now.

14   [laughter] I'm Marisa Parish, the Network Manager

15   for all the lib--all the branches of New York

16   Public Library, here on Staten Island. I'd like

17   to thank Councilmember Brewer and the

18   distinguished members of the Broadband Advisory

19   Committee, and the Council Committee, for all the

20   continued support for the libraries. And also,

21   for the opportunity to speak today. But, I can't

22   talk tech, either, but I can talk about all the

23   library patrons that come to the branches in

24   hundreds and hundreds, and they come to the

25   library many times because it is the only place

that offers free broadband internet access. From

St. George to Tottenville, all of our branches

have wireless service, and last year there were

only 5,000 free wireless sessions in our branches.

While some of our patrons don't have computer

access at all, many of them that do have computer

access don't have that broadband access. And

that's why they come to our branches. And more

and more patrons are able to get the information

they need more promptly. People are coming in

record numbers because, for example, at the Port

Richmond branch, we have computer instruction in

Spanish and English, we have computer instruction

for seniors. At South Beach, there's going to be

a workshop later in the month called "Résumés That

Break the Ice." There's, there's also at

Tottenville a waiting list for basic computer

training. And the librarian there tells me that a

lot of young and older active adults who have been

recently laid off, come in because they have to

learn the basic computer skills now in order to

reenter the job market. So we have staff in all

of our branches on Staten Island that are trained

to assist for job information. And with this

1

2   limited time sessions that they have on the

3   computers, it's very important that prompt, free

4   broadband access, and that's very essential to all

5   of our patrons. And the branches of Staten Island

6   offer patrons computer assistance in so many ways

7   for so many ages. And I have here, also with me

8   today, Courtney Castellane, who is on the

9   frontline, part of the branch team at the South

10   Beach Library. And she's going to tell you a

11   little bit about what she does for her younger

12   patrons.

13   COURTNEY CASTELLANE: Thanks,

14   Marisa. Again, my name's Courtney Castellane,

15   good afternoon everybody. I'm a Children's

16   Librarian Trainee at the South Beach Library. I'm

17   currently studying at Rutgers University to be a

18   certified librarian. I work every day with the

19   children and the teams that come into the library.

20   I don't know how many of you are familiar with the

21   situation in the elementary schools. In many K

22   through five schools, they do not have media

23   centers there. So, more times than not, the only

24   time these children have computer access is when

25   they are coming into the library, because many of

them do not have it at home. Moving on to the

teens, as well, we spoke to somebody from New York

High School spoke. They, they don't have the

broadband access there, so when they have to do

their assignments and their schoolwork, they're

coming to the libraries. Marisa touched upon the

timed session. They get only 45 minutes on the

computers. And people are making appointments the

day before, all day, from the second we open to

the second we close, there's somebody on those

computers. With a timed session, broadband is

imperative, because they're doing everything from

printing out tax forms, looking for a job,

emailing, you know, a family member to let them

know they're okay. Going on Medline to look up,

you know, after they've just spoken to their

physician. They're doing their homework. They

so, they are doing so much with that 45 minutes

that if we did not have broadband, then they'd be

lost, because they'd be sitting there just waiting

for something to download or waiting to connect.

So, like Marisa touched upon, the library is one

of the few places that people know, it's a matter

of knowing. You know what I'm saying, the library

2   is known for having the broadband access, and it's

3   greatly appreciated and greatly utilized and our

4   patrons would be lost without it. So.

5   MALE VOICE: Thank you.

6   [applause]

7   MALE VOICE: Are there any

8   questions for Ms. Parish or Ms. Castellane.

9   PANELIST: Okay. I think every

10   hearing that we've had over the past year or so,

11   we've heard consistently, I think, the great work

12   that the libraries are doing. And I think we will

13   have to really try to figure out, make it into, to

14   support what you're doing. What I do have a

15   question around, obviously sort of your funding

16   mechanism is very complicated. But what can, what

17   suggestions would you have to this committee as it

18   relates to things that we can possibly do, without

19   sort of getting tangled into the, the, your

20   funding mechanism?

21   MARISA PARISH: That's a--that's an

22   interesting question. I don't know if I'm the

23   best one to answer that. I think that we just

24   really have to--I think we could always use really

25   good promotion for all the services that we offer.

1

2   I think that the case in point with the seniors,

3   we know that we're going to be, they're going to

4   be doubling the senior population by, I think it's

5   in ten years, or we're going to have the largest

6   senior population of all the boroughs. We're

7   doing more to work with them now, and with all

8   other kinds of groups that are underserved, right

9   now. And I think that's really very important

10   that people know that the library has that

11   broadband, and that it, it's maintained and - - .

12   I, I attended a similar conference in The Bronx, I

13   was in The Bronx for three years in the libraries.

14   And a few years ago at Bronx Community, I attended

15   a similar conference as this, and I'd just like to

16   know that now many years ago, we're, and have

17   improved and we're moving on, and everyone, and we

18   do get this free service for everybody. And, you

19   know, hopefully that, that's really what I would

20   like to see for all the branches and, all the, all

21   the branches in all the boroughs.

22   PANELIST: Quick question. You

23   have broadband access, user to dedicated

24   computers. Do you provide wireless broadband?

25   MARISA PARISH: Yes. As a matter

1

2   of fact, Courtney, if she can, she's just going to

3   mention a little bit about the laptop use, which

4   is crazy, crazy.

5   COURTNEY CASTELLANE: Yes, I

6   actually work in the smallest branch on the

7   island, so we only have eight laptops there. But

8   they are used by everybody. The teens especially,

9   we have teen laptop time once a week, where the

10   teens can come in and not have to worry about

11   schoolwork, just sit there as we know, social

12   networking is a major trend on the rise, and they

13   sit there, we provide music, they use the laptops,

14   and we also have a lot of patrons that come in

15   with their own laptop, to utilize our broadband

16   wireless. So we had like a day a couple weeks ago

17   that it was down, and you would have thought what

18   happened there--They heavily, heavily rely on us

19   for our wireless broadband, and also for our

20   stationary computers.

21   PANELIST: Thank you.

22   COURTNEY CASTELLANE: No problem,

23   thank you.

24   JOSE LUIS RODRIGUEZ: I understand

25   the minority population on Staten Island is

1

2   increasing, specifically the Latino population.

3   I'm curious to find out, what is the percentage

4   of, of users, of new users, Latinos, in Staten

5   Island? And what is the need, if there's a need,

6   in that population for your services?

7   MARISA PARISH: Percentage wise I

8   can't give you, I can follow up with that. I just

9   know that, that some areas it is a need that's

10   current and it's immediate, it's right now, like

11   in the Port Richmond area. And we're addressing

12   that with bilingual programming and ESOL, the

13   English as a Second Language Program is alive and

14   well in many branches. And it doesn't serve just

15   the Hispanic population, but the Latinos. We're,

16   we're addressing all the demographic changes with

17   many programs that are geared to the--the

18   percentage I'll get you.

19   JOSE LUIS RODRIGUEZ: Is there an

20   increasing need?

21   MARISA PARISH: Yes. I would say

22   so.

23   JOSE LUIS RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

24   MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

25   As Mr. Bell said, we so appreciate the library's

1

2   testimony at all the hearings and just in general.

3   I wish you were librarians and the funding for

4   seven days a week, almost 24/7, to be honest with

5   you. That's what you really need. My question

6   is, we're trying to think, I think as a committee

7   and as a city, how to provide more technology

8   services through these community technology

9   centers, libraries, beacons, senior centers, etc.

10   And I am a proponent of books as well as

11   computers, like everybody else. And certainly

12   like you. But do you think there's any way, and

13   this is perhaps a very challenging question, and I

14   shouldn't be asking it. But is there any way that

15   the libraries with appropriate funding, could be

16   open just for the technology more often. Or do

17   you think that would be contrary to what libraries

18   are all about?

19   MARISA PARISH: Well, of course,

20   we're, we're facing the possibility of having, you

21   know, decreased hours and we're trying to fight

22   that, and maintain our six day service, which is

23   so important to all of us. When you mentioned

24   seven days, we're just hope, struggling now with

25   the impending cuts. But, we are looking at all

1

2   different scenarios and we're looking at the

3   possibility of having, you know, still having

4   instruction, computer instruction still going on.

5   And providing some services so that we can lessen

6   the negative impact that this, that budget cuts

7   may have on all of us. We are looking at that

8   possibility, and still provide as many of those

9   services. We do lots of outreach, too, from all

10 the branches. It is a, it is a concern for us,

11 too.

12   MALE VOICE: Thank you for your

13 testimony.

14   MARISA PARISH: Thank you.

15   MALE VOICE: I'd now like to call

16 Ben Tuorto from MST-NuVisions.

17   BEN TUORTO: - - Good morning, and

18 thank you. My name is Ben Tuorto, I'm the Vice

19 President of Sales for Microwave Satellite

20 Technologies, and also MST. Our brand and

21 trademark is NuVisions. NuVisions was established

22 around 26 years ago, and we operate as a private

23 cable operator, and some of that competition you

24 were talking about earlier, we are evidence of

25 that. And we provide internet access; we're an

1

2   ISP, television service, and digital telephone.

3   We have also operated a large wi-fi network in New

4   York City and parts of New Jersey, that includes

5   parts of Central Park, Dag Hammarskjöld Park,

6   Riverside Park. We do it as an adjunct to the

7   service that we provide to the buildings that we

8   operate in. But we also are able to be a

9   commercial internet service provider in those

10 facilities, I mean, in those settings. I have a

11 lot longer than three minutes here, so I'm going

12 to really try to abbreviate. Another very key

13 element that what we do as an organization, or a

14 technology organization, we provide a solution

15 that uses the electrical lines in buildings to

16 provide connectivity. It's a, it could be called

17 revolutionary technology, but it's really been

18 around for 20 years. We've been using it

19 adequately for four years, very successfully. And

20 it allows you to cut the cost of wiring, to bring

21 connectivity for things like affordable broadband

22 and other applications, including intercom

23 technology, for buildings, CCTV security, at a

24 very affordable rate. You cut the cost line by 50

25 percent. You look at the infrastructure of

1

2   buildings in New York City, you can see the fit,

3   the natural fit, for some of these barriers that

4   work out to be physical barriers. In reading the

5   overview that Councilmember Gale Brewer had for

6   this meeting, the word "barrier" was in there.

7   I've heard the word barrier here a lot today we

8   have heard. And NuVisions represents an

9   opportunity to remove the barrier, certainly of

10   price point, as, as I'll discuss here, as well as

11   technological barriers to provide broadband and

12   some of the needs that we've heard today. We're

13   working currently with the New York City Housing

14   Authority, or NYCHA, on two exciting projects.

15   One of them includes the BPL, the Broadband or

16   Power Line, that use the electric lines I

17   mentioned earlier. There, we have a proof of

18   concept setting in Roosevelt House in Brooklyn,

19   where we're providing connectivity for things like

20   closed circuit television and the intercom

21   functionality of the building, over the electrical

22   lines. What's left to do now is to provide

23   affordable broadband over that same

24   infrastructure. So it's ready and waiting to do,

25   you can have mobile applications in that setting,

2   as I just mentioned, so there's an opportunity for

3   us to break that barrier, of price and technology.

4   On Staten Island, we're, we've embarked on a very

5   exciting project, at Toad Hill House, is where

6   we're providing our triple player services,

7   including affordable broadband at a price point of

8    $14.99 a month. So there we're breaking down the

9   barrier. And to be honest with you, what we've

10   encountered thus far has been a less than stellar

11   attraction by residents to the service, and we're

12   not sure, although today I think validates this.

13   Some of that might be the fact that people don't

14   actually have computers, let alone cause to pay

15   for the service. I think we, we're providing the

16   right service at the right price. We're working

17   with organizations like - - to try to work towards

18   programs that can help facilitate these options in

19   those facilities. And I think, sounds like I'm

20   out of time. I would just say, with the stimulus

21   funds, and the activity that we're seeing with New

22   York City Housing, we, we are definitely poised to

23   assist in all realms where I just discussed. We

24   are, we are here to remove the barrier. We have

25   the technology, and the wherewithal in our

2   organization to invest in buildings - - houses.

3   And, and help remove that barrier. We're, we're

4   an apt proponent and component of what you're

5   trying to achieve. Thank you.

6   MALE VOICE: Thank you. Questions

7   for Mr. Tuorto?

8   PANELIST: What, what kind of, can

9   you specify again the services that you are

10   providing for the residents?

11   BEN TUORTO: Yes.

12   PANELIST: And what the costs are?

13   BEN TUORTO: We're a digi--a dish

14   television service provider, so all in one bill,

15   you can get our triple player services. So we

16   provide Dish television for as low as $33 for our

17   base package. So again, that building, you can,

18   you can enjoy television programming at $33. For

19   telephone, it's in the $29 range, or unlimited.

20   And the broadband, as I mentioned, we have three

21   tiers in that building, so if people wanted a

22   little bit of a higher broadband speed, they can

23   get it. But our lowest tier goes at $14.99. So

24   we are a triple play provider, in, in the

25   residential sector. We're also, we have other

1

2   services in the business settings.

3   PANELIST: Are they all coming

4   through the same wire to the end user, or are they

5   coming through different--

6   BEN TUORTO: Good question. In

7   that, in that particular building, the Toad Hill

8   House, is, New York City has, had embarked on

9   implementing an advanced infra--telecom

10 infrastructure, telecommunications infrastructure,

11 of wiring, so that the wiring was there for us.

12 So we are delivering our services over, over

13 multiple method, methods to the apartment. The

14 television, for instance, goes over coaxial; the

15 broadband in that building goes over coaxial and

16 then tele--or the telephone over copper, twisted -

17 - . We bring our services to the building through

18 multiple means, satellite for television, coaxial

19 lines for the broadband and voice.

20   PANELIST: You mentioned that the,

21 the adoption rate is, is not where you want to see

22 it yet, and you mentioned that access to the

23 computer, I didn't understand--

24   BEN TUORTO: Oh, no, I'm sorry, I

25 wasn't clear enough. The adoption rate is, is, is

2   low, and we've been active since September. We

3   have approximately, call it 30 out of 500 units.

4   We've worked closely with New York City Housing,

5   we've worked closely with the, the tenant

6   association, and even with this - - , we're not

7   seeing people attracted to the service. There's

8   some interest and people call. We don't think

9   it's just an economic barrier, a $14.99 price

10   point, we don't think it's that. So we're

11   starting to wonder a lot that it might be that

12   people don't have a computer, and I don't, I think

13   we heard today that that might be actually

14   somewhat true.

15   AVI DUVDEVANI: Yes, just a couple

16   of full disclosure, MST is one of two licensees

17   that New York City Housing Authority entered into

18   license agreement with, the - - advanced cable

19   infrastructure that we installed in a portion of

20   our developments. And what similar adopted - -

21   Staten Island, and we bought - - so that we - -

22   which I think - - had 500 on the--approximately.

23   And we've been working very, very closely to the -

24   - partner and very aggressively marketing and

25   engaging with our residents. But after all, they

1

2   are just service providers. And one of the

3   thoughts that I myself had in terms of this lack

4   of adoption, 'cause the price point seems to be

5   reasonable. The competition today as Tony advises

6   is Time Warner and possibly - - five of us, the

7   price point here, very attractive. I mean, I wish

8   I could get it at that price point. But the

9   problem, in my view, and it's substantiated by

10   surveys that NYCHA did together with Diamond

11   Consulting, a year or so ago, is that there are

12   inhibitors beyond just the price, and that is the

13   provisioning of the PC, and the training. And to

14   that extent we've encouraged all our licensees,

15   including MST, to try to partner up with CBOs,

16   like - - and others, to try to present the full

17   package of services to our residents, in the hope

18   that we can increase. And we're, we're working

19   very closely, we're supporting--this past month,

20   our general manager sent a letter to each of the

21   Toad Hill residents, together with their monthly

22   billing statement, encouraging them to take a look

23   at this package they offered as an option. And,

24   again, we're not, we're, in terms of making this

25   available to our residents, we agree as Tom just

1

2   said, competition is a wonderful thing. So we've

3   also partnered up with Verizon and ViOS is being

4   installed at - - houses as we speak. And will be

5   likely expanded to other developments, because we

6   really believe that as long as you have multiple

7   service options and prices, ultimately will, will

8   drop. The key is how do we address this challenge

9   of packaging, the full package, for the residents.

10   PANELIST: I'm curious, - - with

11   DSL and cable internet access being offered at the

12   Toad Hill houses? Before the company entered?

13   BEN TUORTO: Absolutely, yes, and

14   if this was an RFP process, they would've went

15   through New York City Housing, and we were, that's

16   why I used the word "invest," but earlier we were

17   willing and able to invest and bring our services

18   there to compete with the incumbents.

19   PANELIST: I'd like to just expand

20   upon what Avi was saying. In my organization,

21   we've done essentially the same thing. And we've

22   encountered the exact same challenges. And, and

23   having worked through this committee, we've come

24   out with essentially three main inhibitors: price

25   for the service, the cost or the actual equipment,

and training. And I can tell you that there is a,

a very strong relationship between having a high

retake rate, if you will, for tenants or residents

who actually have computers. And whether they're

able to - - and I'm not plugging them, so for the

record, but through - - we're able to provide low

cost computes to those residents. We're able to

actually have them subscribe. So I think there's

a lot there. I've been taking some notes, and I

think I lost track of how many times people said

"cost." Which is key, but cost means a lot of

different things to a lot of different people.

So, one of the, the things that I think we'll have

to kind of get, is a good gage of what cost really

means. And I think $14.99 is exactly what we

charge. And it's, - - , that's a great price.

I'm not sure if that's the only, the only

inhibitor to a lot of people, but we know for sure

what we continue to hear repeatedly, it's cost of

access, the hardware, and training. So I think

that's something that we have to continue to

really look, really examine. So, it's just sort

of my piece on this.

BEN TUORTO: Thank you. We agree

2   with you on the training, that's why we're leaning

3   on an - - like the - - . - - one company that

4   does the training piece as well as sell equipment.

5   MALE VOICE: Other questions.

6   BEN TUORTO: Just wanted to thank

7   you, and also just mention that I heard wi--we

8   heard wi-fi mentioned a lot here today, and just

9   to resubmit that, not only do we like to be active

10   with the city supporting the activities that we

11   talked about, for the buildings on Toad Hill and

12   New York City Housing, but we also have the

13   opportunity and capability to expand the use of

14   wireless through our capabilities and our network

15   that is in place. So, it's something just to put

16   on the table. And we appreciate the opportunity.

17   Thank you.

18   MALE VOICE: Thank you, Mr. Tuorto.

19   I'd now like to call Paula Coyle from SIEDC.

20   PAULA COYLE: Good afternoon, my

21   name's Paula Coyle, I'm the Membership Director

22   for the Staten Island Economic Development

23   Corporation. We are a leading business assistance

24   organization, a non-profit on Staten Island. In

25   2007, some of you might be familiar, we

2   commissioned a study from the Center for an Urban

3   Future.   It was entitled "Staten Island 2020."

4   And it laid out 14 recommendations to assist the

5   borough in maximizing its economy by the year

6   2020, and also creating a better quality of life

7   for its residents.   Two of the recommendations I

8   just want to briefly mention now, one directly

9   related to broadband and wireless, which is to get

10   wireless on the Ferry boats and in the terminal.

11   This was recommended both as a benefit for the

12   commuter, but also as a way to do what we always

13   grapple with on State Island, which is get those

14   tourists off the boat and get them, you know, to

15   the local attractions, and then boost the local

16   economy.   And we thought wireless on the boat,

17   complimented with the right kind of advertising

18   and promotion, could link them up with our local

19   tourist organization, SINY.   So, that was one

20   recommendation.   The second one, which seemingly

21   is unrelated to broadband, is to make every effort

22   possible to reach out to the immigrant and

23   minority business community, and to assist them in

24   the obstacles and the challenges that they face in

25   starting and growing their businesses.   And having

1

2   done this for a brief while, I can tell you the

3   greatest impediment to reaching out to this

4   population, and trying to incorporate them into

5   the greater business community on Staten Island is

6   the lack of internet access and broadband access

7   that they're, that is endemic in those

8   communities. Which traditionally are lower income

9   communities, and don't have the access that our

10   more affluent communities do. We could be doing

11   so much more in business assistance and training

12   and just networking, with these entrepreneurs if

13   we had that kind of access for them in their

14   community. Thank you.

15   MALE VOICE: Thank you. Questions

16   for Ms. Coyle?

17   PANELIST: Yeah, is there any

18   specific efforts going on the, in Staten Island to

19   reach out to those communities that have been

20   identified in this report that you are aware of?

21   PAULA COYLE: I missed your first

22   word, is there any--?

23   PANELIST: Any specific efforts

24   that are going on right now, to address the second

25   recommendation.

1

2   PAULA COYLE: Well, I can only

3   speak for our agency, and we are trying to work

4   with local community groups that have

5   relationships with these communities, and reaching

6   to them. And also partnering with business

7   assistance groups, one of which we already have

8   done, which is members of SCORE, which are here in

9   the front row. Thank you. But also, SIEDC, a lot

10 of SIEDC's funding comes from member groups, and

11 they're paid member groups. This year we're

12 establishing a free member group, for immigrant

13 and minority entrepreneurs. It's, it's just being

14 formulated now, it really hasn't been promoted,

15 but it's going to be marketed heavily at our April

16 conference, our April business-to-business

17 conference. And so, you know, we are making every

18 effort possible. I can't speak for any other

19 group on the island.

20   PANELIST: Yeah, I just wanted to

21 make you aware that there are some projects that

22 are, that are being undertaken to provide some

23 services to--especially Latino businesses online,

24 and in an effort to try to reach the maximum

25 number of potential beneficiaries of these

1

2   services. So I would like to talk to you later

3   about that.

4   PAULA COYLE: Please. I know I, I

5   had some brief contact with El Centro - - in Port

6   Richmond, which deals with the Latino immigrant

7   community. And they're working with us at our

8   April conference. Again, it's, it's a large

9   business-to-business conference, about 2,500

10 attendees, and we're having a segment this year,

11 specifically on immigrant entrepreneurs. "Making

12 an Impact" it's called, we have a speaker, whom

13 many of you may now, - - is coming, and we hope

14 to, you know, really address this issue there at

15 that forum. So, I'll leave my contact

16 information.

17   MALE VOICE: I have a question. If

18 you had your best dreams realized, I think what

19 you would want would be to have, not just a

20 competition, which we've heard about, in terms of

21 FiOS and cable, but also some free wireless, so

22 that some of your communities, businesses, etc.,

23 could have access. So, in general, have you made

24 applications for that? Are you thinking about the

25 strategy from the federal government? We're

1

2 delighted to have you here, and thank you for your

3 testimony, because I think it highlights what we

4 all are trying to achieve. And I'm just wondering

5 what's your game plan to try to make it a reality?

6   PAULA COYLE: I don't know if our

7 organization is best equipped, technologically

8 speaking, to do just that. But we would certainly

9 be willing to lend our efforts--I mean, we do have

10 expertise in grant writing and, and networking and

11 things like that. We have great, you know,

12 relationships with our elected officials. So,

13 while we might not be spearheading any effort, I

14 would hope that whoever it is might involve us in,

15 in reaching out.

16   PANELIST: I'm just curious, I

17 mean, you know, it's funny we started this

18 commission with a different economy. Things have

19 turned around 180 degrees. We hear the word "free

20 access," we hear the word, you know, "free

21 computers." This is the economy of today. And I

22 guess, you know, this - - report from the urban

23 center, - - you know, having a federal development

24 corporation. If, what's here, anything to address

25 the business model that would look to create any

1

2   type of revenue from the Staten Island Ferry. So

3   that it could sustain itself, as opposed to us

4   trying to always get, you know, free service.

5   PAULA COYLE: I, I can't speak to

6   that. I know that there has been, and I'm only

7   relaying information that I receive from Captain

8   DiSimone at the Staten Island Ferry. I know

9   there's been talk about wireless, and I know

10 there's been some assessments done by companies on

11 how to put the boats in the Ferry terminal.

12 Whether or not that's, you know, revenue

13 generating, I don't know. And, and we don't have

14 anything in place right now. When we think about

15 the Ferry, honestly, a lot of times we think about

16 tourism dollars. And, and the empty retail spaces

17 there that everyone's very angry about. So,

18 again, not, not necessarily with the, with the

19 broadband wireless model, no.

20   PANELIST: My understanding from

21 other cities and transit systems, around the world

22 that put wi-fi on ferries and trains, is that you

23 need to look at as a larger regional

24 transportation picture, because every person that

25 gets on transit because of the wireless, that

doesn't get in a car, has real, that's a real

dollar value, in terms of congestion. So it's a

little abstract, but--

PAULA COYLE: Thank you for

answering the question.

PANELIST: Well, I guess, I guess

the bigger question, is how do we begin to take

some of these ideas and bring them to the market?

You know, and make the market, you know, assume

some of the risk and some of the cost. And I

think that's, you know, just part of the

discussion.

PAULA COYLE: Right. And, and, you

know, I can take that back to my organization.

And I don't know if, I don't think there's any

plan afoot right now, but I don't think it's

anything that we would be averse to. And it might

be, you know, some food for thought, and as we

plan our new projects, and things like that.

MALE VOICE: Thank you.

PANELIST: One final question.

From your organization, have you conducted a sort

of means assessment as relates to the businesses,

specifically what they would like to see in terms

of the broadband, and other types of, other types

of platforms? And also, do you have a sense of

how many businesses actually need these types of

services?

PAULA COYLE: We have not done

anything like that, no. I regret to say.

PANELIST: I thought of a follow up

question related to the - - had mentioned, how

many of these businesses are home based

businesses, as opposed to retail spaces?

PAULA COYLE: Let me stress to the-

-we have just started trying to do this. So, we,

we rely on community groups to get us in front of

people. So we don't have any formalized

membership lists, we don't have any formalized

client list yet. And so I can't really say who's

out of their home and who's not. I would imagine,

though, that any business starts in the home, at

some point, researching and, you know, networking,

that kind of thing.

MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

And now I'd like to call Beverly Newhouse from

Richmond Senior Services.

BEVERLY NEWHOUSE: Good afternoon.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

I'm Beverly Newhouse, Executive Director of

Richmond Senior Services. And I'm here to speak

on behalf of the low income seniors and disabled

persons on Staten Island. Our services focus on

their housing needs. And our services include

affordable housing, accessibility ramifications,

emergency home repairs to the elderly, the homes

of the elderly, and minor and health and safety

repairs. Through these programs, I frequently

speak with and visit the homes of seniors and

disabled persons. And know that they have great

difficulty in meeting their expenses. And can

barely afford to pay their utility bills and

purchase food, let alone meet the costs of

computers and broadband services. They are often

isolated from the socialization we all enjoy. And

they cannot access information on the services

they require to meet their daily needs. They are,

in other words, out of the loop. Having broadband

services would open up their worlds. On today's

communication superhighway, they're still driving

the Model A Ford. They don't have the means to

communicate quickly, and easily, with family

members, living at a distance. They can't see

their children and grandchildren on Facebook. And

they remain lonely and uninformed. Most of us

here today can't imagine not having email, or

checking the local news, or visiting sites that

can explain our medical conditions, or the state

of the economy, or the up to date election

results. They can't participate in chat rooms,

and some of the things that have become the norm

for all of us. That's exactly where so many of

our seniors and homebound disabled persons are.

While our worlds expand beyond what we could've

imagined only a few years ago, theirs is

shrinking. Where we can learn and fill our minds

with the knowledge that keeps us vibrant and

alive, they are left with little to stimulate

them. We know that exercising our minds is

necessary to maintain healthy mind. But we leave

our elderly and disabled persons without the very

basics they need. We can go out to a movie, or

visit the library, or go an historic site or

social event. They must face the same walls each

day, without the financial means to attend those

events. And aren't able to reach out through the

electronic system that has enabled the rest of the

world to thrive. Think about how confined you may

have felt in the recent snowstorm that you

couldn't leave your house quickly and get where

you needed to go. And on top of that, an

inability to check your email, surf the internet,

go to your Blackberry, or go to your favorite chat

room. And now multiply that by 365 days a year.

Just this year. And imagine what it's like to be

confined every day, without the means to reach

out. The cost of providing broadband service is

relatively minimal when compared to the results of

isolation and lack of knowledge. A program to

provide equipment and staffing, and perhaps

community volunteers such as Bea Victor talked

about earlier through the Senior Net program,

would go a long way to address the needs of

seniors, to make that equipment available, to

teach them how to use the internet, and to open up

their world. And I urge some funding to meet the

needs of one of our most vulnerable populations,

so they can bring about some positive changes in

their lives.

MALE VOICE: Thank you. Are there

1

2   any questions for Ms. Newhouse?

3   MALE VOICE: Thank you for your

4   testimony. Do you work with a group called OATS,

5   O-A-T-S? Have you ever heard of them?

6   BEVERLY NEWHOUSE: No.

7   MALE VOICE: Okay. We will provide

8   that information, because they're groups that work

9   with seniors in the home, seniors in the center,

10   doing some of the discussion that you would like.

11   And second, I know that there is possibility in

12   this very challenging economy, of more

13   intergenerational funds between the Department for

14   Youth and Community Development, and the

15   Department for the Aging. So you could have the

16   amazing students from New Door [phonetic] to work

17   with some of your seniors. So, I urge you to kind

18   of think along those terms, and we'd be glad to

19   work with you.

20   BEVERLY NEWHOUSE: Thank you.

21   MALE VOICE: Thanks.

22   MALE VOICE: Other questions.

23   Thank you. I'd now like to call Michael Devito

24   from NYCID.

25   MICHAEL DEVITO: Good day. I'm

1

2   Michael Devito from the New York Center for

3   Interpersonal Development. We are a non-profit

4   organization that works in conflict resolution and

5   new development. I suppose I'm here today to just

6   talk about the number of schools here on Staten

7   Island. We are present in some four high schools

8   and about seven public schools. And often, we

9   find a challenge keeping our systems up and

10 running. We're very lucky to have the funding for

11 sophisticated computers and, and whatnot, but then

12 when we get to the building, we find that most of

13 the wiring systems are outdated, so our internet

14 and our services are sometimes rendered useless

15 for a few days until we can get things working

16 again, and figure out what the problems are, and

17 where the wiring is, is fouling up. So, that's

18 really all I have to add.

19   MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

20 Are there questions for Mr. Devito?

21   MALE VOICE: The schools are

22 supposed to be better than that. What do you do

23 when you have that problem? Do you, does the

24 school recommend the hotline? Is there an onsite

25 tech person? How do you handle that?

2   MICHAEL DEVITO: We, we, both,

3   there are onsite tech people. And it depends, it

4   does depend on the school. And for example, one

5   of the old schools that now a tech, technical high

6   school, we were in that building for about two

7   years. And it was a constant struggle with the

8   internet staying up, and the only recourse really

9   was to reach out to that individual who would

10 reset the system or look to see where the, the

11 problem was, and then try to, you know, try to

12 create a plan to fix it.

13   MALE VOICE: Thank you.

14   MICHAEL DEVITO: Thank you.

15   MALE VOICE: I'd now like to call,

16 I can't see if it's Daniel Coates or Gates, from

17 Make the Road New York.

18   DANIEL COATES: Hi, it's, it's

19 Coates, with a C. I'm going to use my

20 technologically advanced Blackberry - - . So

21 thank you very much for hearing my testimony

22 today. As brief introduction, I work for Make the

23 Road New York. We are the city's largest

24 membership based immigrant's rights organization,

25 with over 5,000 dues paying members, with three

1

2 offices, and one in Brooklyn, one in Queens, and

3 the smallest one in Staten Island. So, broadband

4 in work, first as an organization, we've heard a

5 lot from different folks here. I'm not going to

6 say anything that's particularly new. But for

7 anybody who's trying to coordinate multiple sites,

8 broadband is absolutely essential. There was a

9 period where we were using dial up in the Staten

10 Island office a couple of years ago, and it was

11 impossible to do, to do any work. So in that

12 sense, as a non-profit, organizing organization,

13 absolutely, absolutely essential. In terms of our

14 membership, the community that we're serving in

15 Staten Island, in Staten Island we provide health

16 and legal services, as well as a pretty robust

17 series of English classes, starting from basic

18 English learning, and, and literacy. Folks who

19 are illiterate, up to pretty advanced, pretty

20 advanced English. Every year we probably serve

21 about, we probably have about, between four and

22 600 students in three - -. Our, our members are

23 between 95 and 99 percent Latino immigrants,

24 predominately from Mexico. We are on - -. The

25 three things that we hear from our members are

first folks can't get access to broadband service

because of either the costs are too high, they

don't have a credit card, so they can't set it up;

or they are unclear about what the costs are

actually going to be. So they sign up for

something, and they, and they end up, you know,

being asked to pay a lot more than they initially

expected to. And the third part of it is after

what Reverend Ryan said at the beginning, is just

a lack of knowledge about how to use a computer.

We do provide computer classes in our Queens

office. I think it would be incredibly,

incredibly useful for the Staten Island office, as

well. We have folks who just don't know how to

write an email, don't know how to turn a computer

on. It's computer phobia, it's also desire mixed

with a lack of, a lack of knowledge. So, as a

recommendation, I mean, I feel lot of folks, as we

have said before, funding, we would love to be

able to provide these classes. We've got a

limited number of laptops, but we just don't have

the, we just don't have the capacity.

MALE VOICE: And we'll have to keep

it there. Thank you very much.

DANIEL COATES: Thank you.

MALE VOICE: Are there any
questions for Mr. Coates?

MALE VOICE: Thank you very much
for all your work. My question is, I know you
have the same list of barriers that others do.
Would there be some benefit in the libraries being
open, community training centers, some of the
things I talked about earlier, as a broader
policy. Obviously we have to make sure that
everybody's assisted, your clients and others.
And I just wanted to know if you could think of a
broader scheme that might make sense. I just
wondered what it might be.

DANIEL COATES: Yeah, I think--and
in terms of a broad approach to this sort of a
thing, use, using existing networks and existing
centers as much as possible, that folks go to for
other reasons, would be a good way to start. I
know a lot of our members don't think about, you
know, "Oh if I, if only I could use a computer and
have it access all this information out there."
It's, "I need to learn English so that I can get a
job." And then, at this place that I go to, "Oh,

they all sort of happen to have computers." And

so as, as much as it's possible to use centers

that are doing food pantries or other sorts of

things as the locations where folks are getting

access to that sort of education, I think about

it.

PANELIST: Yes, I have a quick

question. - - opinions about, and that's been

proven by research, about 50 percent, 55 percent

of Latinos are not online. Based on new members,

how many of them are online right now?

DANIEL COATES: I would say less

than the 55 percent that, that you're citing;

probably 20 or 25, I'd say that's about the rate

of folks having internet in their, in their homes,

as well. And we have a lot of people coming in to

ask us to do, you know, "Can you help me get on

the internet?" etc., etc. But as a percentage of

our membership in Staten Island, it's probably

about 20-25 percent, I mean, across the board.

Queens and Brooklyn, it's probably, probably

similar.

PANELIST: Okay.

MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

2   DANIEL COATES: Thank you.

3   MALE VOICE: I'd now like to call

4   Wayne Roy of Troy Net.

5   WAYNE ROY: Good afternoon. Thank

6   you for having me. I'm Wayne Roy, I'm the CTO of

7   Troy Net. We're a technology - - for our business

8   in New York, and on large scale for K to 12

9   education, in New York, New Jersey and D.C. We do

10   project management, design, just all configuration

11   support, computer network systems. So we're the

12   guys that actually come in and have to deal with

13   getting the internet up and running. You know,

14   and they're businesses as well as in education.

15   I'm going to lead with education first, 'cause

16   that's our big, our vertical. And second, because

17   I have three children, and about seven days I have

18   my fourth coming. I have a vested interest in

19   education. We work a lot with schools and what

20   we've found is connectivity is very, very

21   important. We do a lot with video on demand,

22   keeping those schools communicating back and forth

23   with each other. We deal with a lot with crazy

24   technology, with VoIP which is I think the voice

25   over IP phone systems. We deal a lot with

1

2   wireless at schools, and actually getting on the

3   internet is primary key thing for schools, but

4   most of the businesses that we deal with is

5   internet, internet. Our company's itself could

6   not function if we didn't have some type of

7   internet provisioning for our company. Okay. I

8   would say 80 percent of our work we do is by the

9   internet connected to our clients actually being

10   able to establish connection. Going back to

11   schools, we deal with the SIS system which is - -

12   for schools, they have to go through the internet

13   to actually get to the student information system.

14   The students - - students from they day they get

15   to school till they're ready to move over to

16   college. And it's transferred from school to

17   school. They need good structure to facilitate

18   that ability to bring that information from one

19   school to the other school. They need the ability

20   to get on the internet, get information. I know

21   the committee started doing a webcast. Schools

22   also doing that type of thing where they have

23   content and they're making it available to other

24   schools. The biggest problem is, schools can't

25   afford internet access. Most of them, I'd say, 85

schools we work with, get funding through - -

that's the only way they could afford internet

service. [crosstalk, laughter] Okay. It's the

only way they can afford internet services. My

comment on internet access - - or what somebody

issued - - first and foremost what I see - - it's

not enough infrastructure, and less affluent

neighborhoods. In the poor neighborhoods, it's

very difficult to get proper service in those

neighborhoods, from my perspective - -. Cost as

well, when I see cost - - to support making it

affordable. Forget - - and I see a lot of - -

cheaper, but what you get, when I use it on my

side, to support - - people complained it about it

not working - - plus it's so cheap, there's no - -

There's nothing worth - - foundation, but have

something cost effective and manageable, and

making it available to all neighborhoods, not

specific neighborhoods, is very important.

MALE VOICE: Thank you, sir.

Questions for Mr. Roy.

PANELIST: Where do you get your

workers from? The people that install these

networks and, and all around - -?

WAYNE ROY: Our employees?

PANELIST: Yeah.

WAYNE ROY: Go on the internet, you put out an ad, on the internet, and that's how they found us.

PANELIST: I'm just curious like what, you know, what kind of access to technology did you have when you were growing up. Just think of all the kinds of initiatives that we're thinking potentially about here, this huge workforce training opportunity, as we design, build and operate, in a sense, it'd be interesting to explore someone who's actually doing it, you know, what's, what are the problems? Where do people get the training they need to work for someone like you?

WAYNE ROY: Gotcha. Actually, a lot of the people come on board. Just to give you my background, I actually graduated from this school, I have a bachelor of science in engineering from this school. A lot of the guys we bring on board, we train most of the people we have. But a lot of them go off and they get their certification - - certification you get? Online

1

2 training. Okay, for like MCSE, CCNA, that's - -

3 that's my senior engineer, okay, I believe you

4 have a comment.

5 SENIOR ENGINEER: Yes, what I

6 wanted to say is like, I graduated from CSI, with

7 a bachelor in computer science, and also a masters

8 in computer science, and I'm presently his senior

9 engineer. But before, I started the internet in

10 my community in Senegal in West Africa, in '96.

11 And some of the comment that I'm hearing, I'm kind

12 of like, no, I'm dreaming. I'm sitting here and

13 hearing the problem with the cost of computers.

14 In '99 before I left because I came here in '99, I

15 have a program to start using separate box that

16 connect to your TV, to have internet access. So,

17 sometime when I hear the problem is the computer

18 to computer. I'm like, but there are solutions

19 out there that people that cannot afford the

20 computer, at least 200 bucks, or sometimes even be

21 some program with the $100 computer that they have

22 sometime in Africa, why don't you use that over

23 here, for senior citizen, for high schools. And

24 eventually give people some computers that are

25 only - - that they can use for the internet. For

1

2   some immigrant in Senegal, I have a program which

3   is like a videophone, that they can use to see

4   their family members back home. And at the same

5   time, what I discover, some of the parents that

6   I'm - - they come ask their kids to take the

7   homeworks, show it on the video to somebody like

8   me, that can help them with their homeworks,

9   because their parents cannot help them. So there

10   are solutions out there, once the program is

11   available, I can guarantee people will use it.

12   Thank you.

13   MALE VOICE: Excellent. Thank you

14   very much, Troy Net. Our next speaker is Nikki

15   Odlivak of the Community Agency for Senior

16   Citizens.

17   NIKKI ODLIVAK: Hello.

18   Councilwoman Brewer, thank you for your work on

19   this. But even more importantly, for me, and my

20   agency, thank you for your work on the Aging

21   Committee. I'm actually going to give some

22   comments. I have no written statement, but I have

23   some comments in terms of the aging and seniors.

24   My colleague, Joe Tornello, who is the CEO of

25   Meals on Wheels on Staten Island had to leave for

1

2   an appointment, and he has some talking points as

3   well. CASC, Community Agency for Senior Citizens,

4   has been around since '74. And because of capital

5   funding that we received from our late Assemblyman

6   Lavelle, John Lavelle, we were able to network in

7   2004. And I have to stress that because we were

8   way behind the times, when we finally became

9   networked. However, we also have people who are

10   off site. We have four senior centers that we are

11   sponsoring, and we have three case managers in

12   three housing sites, who are not connected in our

13   network. We've heard about cost, and certainly

14   it's one thing to get hardware and the equipment,

15   and then it's another thing to maintain it. And

16   that is a cost that nonprofits have difficult

17   across the board. On a personal note, my mother--

18   and I really appreciate Bea Victor--my mother, who

19   will be turning 80 was absolutely against any kind

20   of computer, even though we kept encouraging her

21   to consider taking a class. Also, a nurse, who is

22   constantly looking up in her journals and her

23   medical books, all about medical diseases for her,

24   my father who's going to be 85, and the rest of

25   the friends and family, you know, across this

country. She, because of the young man who moved

in next door to her, and who's very computer

literate, she finally became a little bit, you

know, he gave her the old Mac that he was getting

rid of, and started teaching her in a very,

probably much easier way than her own daughters

could have done, and now my mother, yes, sir. Now

my mother actually is going on the internet. And

she loves it. And she keeps in communication with

her daughters in Montana and New York, as well as

family and friends across this country. My mother

drives and she gets out--by the way, she lives in

Chicago--she drives, she gets out, she's not

isolated, but this has put her in a whole 'nother

world of information and education. And we can't

stress that enough of how important it is. It

isn't, the new isolation for the senior, it is the

new isolation, not having the internet access. I

want to say something about our senior centers. -

- did have a collaboration with Time Warner Cable,

and sometime around 2003-2004, every senior center

across the city was given an email address and had

internet access. But that's kind of where it

ended. Our own people put their routers to

connect one to four of our computers, but we

certainly do not have the money to create little

computer labs, which is really the next thing we

need to do for our members. Because the seniors

who do come to the centers, many are interested.

Once you have a small group who begin to learn,

brand new, have no knowledge, then they entice the

others who may have been even more fearful to come

and consider doing this. I want to say something

about Access New York City.

MALE VOICE: We're actually going

to have to, I have to cut that there, but perhaps

that will come out in some of the questions.

Thank you very much. Are there questions for Ms.

Odlivak?

MALE VOICE: What were you going to

say?

NIKKI ODLIVAK: About Access New

York City, thank you very much [laughter] The,

the number of, the number expected in Access NYC,

was giving away computers. And of course we were

- - the number that they expected to sort of

filter through the site was too much for the

senior centers, at least the ones I think on

2   Staten Island, in order to access those computers.

3   So, so we hit the road back there. I just want to

4   say to the NYCHA, the gentleman from NYCHA, I

5   mean, out of the nine NYCHA sites on Staten

6   Island, eight have senior centers in their

7   buildings. And I know nothing about the

8   friendship clubs, besides who runs them. But if

9   they have this broadband access at Toad Hill and

10   Berry Homes, I would hope that there would be some

11   kind of computer setup, computer lab setup, in

12   those senior centers, perhaps provided by NYCHA

13   funding. And yet I know that you guys have

14   problems, too, with your budget. But, you know,

15   here you're having this broadband access, in your

16   Toad Hill and Berry Homes, and it's, it's like a

17   perfect fit for providing a small way up at those

18   senior centers.

19   PANELIST: If I may. So we

20   actually work very hard on the senior centers,

21   particularly in areas where Time Warner has a

22   franchise, because probably, I don't want to mis--

23   mischaracterize, but the part of - - came with a,

24   existing franchise agreement that we were able to

25   put in access through the Time Warner cable modem,

in many of the senior centers.

NIKKI ODLIVAK: I think across the

city, franchise clubs as well as our four centers,

as well, have a Sta--Well, of course, I can only

speak for Staten Island Roadrunner email account.

But, which was great. That was the first step.

We need to build on to it. Education is

absolutely the most important thing about senior,

with seniors. Not the broadband cost, quite

frankly. If you can't get them to, to be even, to

feel at ease to turn on a computer, what's it

matter what the broadband cost? And anyways, that

broadband should be free in senior centers.

MALE VOICE: Other questions.

Thank you Ms Odlivak. [applause] I'd now like to

call Kayza Kleinman from the Jewish Community

Council of Coney Island. And - - I think we've

heard - - yes.

KAYZA KLEINMAN: Good afternoon.

My name is Kayza Kleinman, I'm the Chief

Information Officer of the Jewish Community

Council, and I run the nonprofit help desk, which

has worked over the last two decades with

approximately 800 plus organizations throughout

1

2   the city. And I've watched a lot of the

3   technology changes, and tried to make them work

4   for us. Now, before I get to my written

5   testimony, I'd like to just comment on a few

6   things that came up in prior testimonies. And I

7   will make it quick. First thing, in terms of the

8   ease of use issues, I think it's a huge issue.

9   And I do have to say that I must commend the

10 Access NYC folks. This has to be one of the best

11 thought out sites that I have seen, it's in

12 several languages, I've talked to people who read

13 those other languages, and they tell me that yeah,

14 the translations are actually pretty good. And it

15 really is easy to use, is very focused, and it

16 really is, you know, talking to our staff who've

17 been using Access NYC with our seniors, it really,

18 it's nice, it really, and I can't, I can't get

19 better than that. It really is great. Secondly,

20 in terms of, in terms of seniors, and this is

21 something I can speak to personally, 'cause my

22 mother is a senior, and she's got friends, as well

23 as my work from JCC, which does a lot of senior

24 advocacy, this was something that I'd been asked

25 about. Having home access is a big issue because

a lot of seniors are, if not technically

homebound, they can be homebound much more easily

than, like, you know, other people, bad weather or

something, will shut in their homes much more

easily. Having the internet access at home is a

huge step in the right direction. Somebody asked

about cell phones for students. Well, this is a

cell phone. Okay, even if the entire screen was

full, you can't really do an assignment, read a

three page article or whatever, on a cell phone,

the way you can on a computer. Cell phones are

great for mobile access, but they don't really

replace a computer with even a nine inch screen,

which isn't big, but there's just no comparison.

Especially since most sites are not designed for

the small form factor. Okay. Somebody had

mentioned, you know, the issue of telecom

liability. Okay. We have VOIP system, we go

down, we're out of business, so we actually use T1

plus - - lines, because otherwise we're out of

business. Okay, now with my written testimony,

I'll have to a do a little skipping. Staten

Island has a growing population according to the

census bureau, 8.8 percent from 2000 to 2007.

1

2 Populations grow needs, growth not at the same

3 rate, but exponentially. So a lot of the issues

4 that have been talked about, really, really are

5 more so than they look like they would be two

6 years ago, - - . Combine that with the economic

7 changes we've dealt with, and with the growth in

8 how everything is on the way, which is pretty much

9 a good thing, because a lot of things that weren't

10 possible are now possible. But it means that

11 those who don't have access are far more

12 disadvantaged than they were two years ago. It's

13 a huge issue. There are, as noted, both people

14 and organizations that are on broadband, not on

15 broadband, as really, really hurting them. And

16 for a lot of these places, it's not, and quite a

17 few organizations primarily, it is not a matter of

18 education, its budget, it's dealing with, you

19 know, all sorts of auxiliary issues. Okay. Two

20 issues that crop up is that, number one, these

21 studies, for instance, there's a great map that

22 you have, that shows wonderful access all over

23 Staten Island. It's not really true, in that

24 there are pockets in places where you either can't

25 get access, even though, you know, and b) where

you can't get low cost access. In other words,

you've got to pay $500 to $600 for a T1 line,

rather than $80, $70-80 for a DSL cable line.

Makes no sense. Huge issue. And you can't tell

organizations, "Well, move to where it's better."

They're community based, they're rooted in the

community, they move, their mission disappears.

And anyway, you know, it's going to have to, we

need to deal with this. So, it's a huge, huge

issue, there's got to be some push to get access

into these pockets, and to get it done affordably.

One other, one other point is--

MALE VOICE: Last one.

KAYZA KLEINMAN: Okay, last point,

yes. For, for organizations to make the most

effective use of broadband, people need to have

access. Because I want, as a school or an

organization, trying to provide education

advocacy, whatever it is, I can have the greatest

website in the universe, if my constituents can't

get to it because they don't have access, then it

doesn't help anybody. So, it's a two way street

and, you know, to be effective, we need to get

access to both individuals and organizations.

2   MALE VOICE: Thank you. Questions

3   for Ms. Kleinman?

4   PANELIST: I'm sorry to harp on

5   this issue, but you brought it up again. You

6   know, about T1s versus DSLs.

7   KAYZA KLEINMAN: Right.

8   PANELIST: And critical services.

9   What's the reliability difference between the two?

10   Like in terms of up time.

11   KAYZA KLEINMAN: For--

12   PANELIST: What's the risk you're

13   taking if you go with DSL--

14   KAYZA KLEINMAN: Well--

15   PANELIST: - - DSL.

16   KAYZA KLEINMAN: Yeah. - - you're

17   talking about a static DSL like, for instance,

18   your risk level is very low. I'll give you, I

19   have to tell you something funny. We, for years,

20   the only thing we could get was static DSL, which

21   for us wasn't really enough, because we needed the

22   higher bandwidth. But we actually had less down

23   time with our SDSL line than with our first T1

24   provider. Even though officially we had a, we had

25   an SLA. The only reason we stayed with T1

providers, 'cause we needed the higher speed that

was available. But stability and quality of

service on business grade lines can be high enough

that for many, many purposes, it really, really is

good enough. You know, for our phone lines, it's

not the best mostly, although again, I would say

something interesting, our T1, we have five

centers on our - - system. Our T1, we have three,

three SDSL lines and one T1. Oddly enough, our T1

has gone down more than the other three DSL lines

put together. Because of the locations, I can't

really blame the provider, partly it's the

location, they're right off the beach, and that

creates some, some issues with the copper that's

coming in. But the point is, very, very often,

the lower cost service is good enough, the

occasional outage isn't going to kill the

business, and it's not worth the extra $400, five,

$400 dollars a month, just doesn't make sense.

MALE VOICE: Other questions?

MALE VOICE: Thanks for all your

work.

MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

I'd next like to call Joshua Breitbart of People's

2   Production House. He's gone, okay. I would then

3   next like to call Vincent Renza [phonetic] of

4   Staten Island NFP Association.

5   VINCENT RENZA: Good afternoon. My

6   name is Vincent Renza, I am the Executive Director

7   of the Staten Island NFP Association. It's an

8   organization that counts 110 of Staten Island's

9   not-for-profit organizations as members. In my

10   work with these organizations, I've come to an

11   understanding of the tools and strategies that

12   they need to utilize to fulfill their missions of

13   providing valuable service and important

14   contributions to our community. While many people

15   understand the importance of planning,

16   implementing, and sustaining for dramatic efforts,

17   they may not appreciate the extent to which

18   technology, specifically as to broadband

19   connections, is incorporated into the successful

20   management of a not-for-profit organization. As

21   is the case in any industry, the ability to

22   quickly and effectively send and receive

23   information is a critical component of the work

24   that Staten Island's not-for-profits do to keep

25   their stakeholders engaged and informed. The

1

2   importance of having access to effective

3   communication technology is hard to overstate. As

4   we all know, email has become the default means of

5   communicating among leaders in almost all fields,

6   not-for-profits sector being no exception. Event

7   notices and confirmations are, at any

8   organizations, managed online. And an ever

9   increasing percentage of corporations and

10 foundations now accept funding requests

11 exclusively via online quotation processes.

12 Having a modern mission driven web presence is,

13 for almost all not-for-profits, an absolute

14 necessity. And this year, all not-for-profits

15 that have revenues of less than $25,000 will be

16 required to file an electronic compliance form

17 with the IRS. In addition, access to

18 communications technologies can translate into

19 direct cost savings for not-for-profit

20 organizations, charged with navigating these

21 difficult economic times. From telephone and web

22 conferencing services to automated climate control

23 systems and shared virtual and offsite computing,

24 the list of cost saving opportunities that are

25 contingent on access to modern communication

technologies is extensive. Of course, all these

opportunities and activities are tied directly to

the capability of organizations to access high

speed broadband connectivity. We are fortunate

that most of Staten Island's not-for-profit

organizations have the opportunity to access

broadband connections at their place of business.

Many of them actually enjoy a choice of providers,

as we've been talking about today. This access

and choice have been of great benefit to these

organizations and we look forward to continuing to

helping these important community as far as

continuing to provide services and programs that

add so much to - - vibrancy. Thank you.

MALE VOICE: Thank you. Questions

for Mr. Renza.

PANELIST: The prior speaker of

JCC, she just left--

VINCENT RENZA: Mmhm.

PANELIST: --indicated shockingly

there are numerous not-for-profits that do not

have access.

VINCENT RENZA: Mmhm.

PANELIST: Is that your experience?

VINCENT RENZA: It is not. I'm not sure, I mean, I'd have to speak to her, I don't know which organization she was referring to. I do know that some of our small organizations, our volunteer organizations, for instance, may not have access because of some of the other issues that we're talking about today, whether they're volunteer led, or led by people who just choose not to have access. But in my experience, I have not run into anyone who just, you know, wants the service but cannot access it.

PANELIST: Thank you.

MALE VOICE: Other questions? One personal plug, regarding the 20th School of Public Affairs, will be releasing a population projectable study of nonprofits and their technology - -

VINCENT RENZA: Really?

MALE VOICE: Right now we are finding relatively low incidence of non-broadband access for organizations. But we'll have all the stats out shortly. Thank you, sir. I would now like to call Joshua Breitbart, I believe he has returned to the room.

2   JOSHUA BREITBART: I'm - - thank

3   you, I pass my turn.

4   MALE VOICE: Mr. Breitbart

5   declines. Thank you, sir. I would like to call

6   instead, Gonzalo Cervantes from the College of

7   Staten Island. Mr. Cervantes? I believe Mr.

8   Cervantes may have left. And last also from the

9   College of Staten Island, Valerie DeAngelo.

10   VALERIE DEANGELO: Good afternoon.

11   I'm a - - college student here at the College of

12   Staten Island. I'm an engineering major and have

13   a couple minors with that, too. But broadband is

14   really important for me as a student, especially

15   in my field, because I need to keep up on the

16   newest technology out, I need to know what

17   publications have been released with the journals,

18   especially when I'm doing research papers. And

19   broadband gives me the access to do that as soon

20   as possible. If my teachers need to get in

21   contact with me, or have any information about

22   speaking at a hearing, or just other things that

23   are going on around the college, that's how they

24   let me know, and that's how I get involved. My

25   internship program, I found out and applied right

through the internet. I interned MTA Bridges and

Tunnels, had the most amazing experience of my

life, and that all was possible because of

broadband. In one of my classes last semester, I

was actually able to have the class with Turkey,

with the college students from Turkey. And it was

really interesting to see how alike they are with

us, and the stuff that they're learning is a lot

like the stuff that we're learning here. And

through the College of Staten Island Library, we

were actually able to talk to them, and speak with

them, and it was really cool. But especially for

a college student, and any student even if you're

in high school or in grammar school, this is

what's going to keep you on top of things, and

this is what's going to get you interested in your

field, and keep you learning. And I really think

that's one of the most important things that

broadband can do for you.

MALE VOICE: Thank you. Questions

for Ms. DeAngelo?

MALE VOICE: First of all, thank

you. McCauley is in my district on the west side,

so have you been there? To 67th Street?

2   VALERIE DEANGELO: I took a class

3   there, last semester.

4   MALE VOICE: Very cool, right?

5   VALERIE DEANGELO: Yeah, it is.

6   MALE VOICE: The question I have

7   is, again, some of your colleagues spoke earlier,

8   but here at the college, what percentage do you

9   think have access at home? And also if you are

10   from Staten Island, what happened in your high

11   school? We're trying to figure out this divide

12   between school and work, and what we can do to

13   address it.

14   VALERIE DEANGELO: I think a lot of

15   people, I know all the people I know, have access

16   to internet at home. So, I think it's at least

17   half if not more. And as far as schools, I went

18   to St. John Bell Academy for high school. We had

19   a computer lab that had access to internet where

20   we took all our classes, and our library was, too.

21   The whole school wasn't wired for wireless,

22   though, it's mainly on the main computers, and I

23   think that's because they didn't want us bringing

24   our laptops in, and going on - - .

25   PANELIST: Just curious, how old

were you when you first touched a computer

keyboard?

VALERIE DEANGELO: I'd say about

eight or nine.

PANELIST: Really?

VALERIE DEANGELO: Yeah, I was

young.

PANELIST: Good. Very good. And

you still read books, I hope, right?

VALERIE DEANGELO: Yes.

PANELIST: Good.

VALERIE DEANGELO: A lot of them on

the internet. [laughter]

MALE VOICE: Other questions?

Thank you very much for your testimony.

VALERIE DEANGELO: Thank you.

MALE VOICE: This brings us to the

conclusion of our announced speakers. Is there

anyone in the room right now who believes him or

herself to have been announced and is planning to

speak? Did you fill out the card?

LOUIS GLOVNER: Yes.

MALE VOICE: Okay, I didn't get

that. Are, are you--

2   PANELIST: What's your name?

3   MALE VOICE: - - Louis Glovner

4   [phonetic].

5   MALE VOICE: Are you Joseph Tornelo

6   or Louis Glovner.

7   LOUIS GLOVNER: Yes.

8   MALE VOICE: Louis Glovner, please

9   Mr. Glovner.

10   LOUIS GLOVNER: You should have,

11   some handouts, as well, there's a written copy.

12   And I'll just - - through this quickly, the

13   questions. Thanks for this opportunity. Last, my

14   - - activities, as we all know capital intensive

15   process, - - cables through conduits, and boring

16   holes in buildings, pushing wires through walls,

17   and other physical challenges. There's an

18   overlooked aspect involving a regulatory legal

19   environment, and the hurdles involved in community

20   associations or nonprofit groups, enabling - -

21   access. My goal today is to address these issues,

22   in particular the DOT and DOIT policies regarding

23   franchises and - - . Suggest that we establish a

24   tenant's right to connectivity, and make the best

25   use of our, of our public resources in order to do

so. Preparing these are conditions with community

associations, nonprofits and cooperative/

condominium style ownership models in mind. I

believe the introduction of nonprofit wire speed

networks in New York City would bring about

significant social and economic benefits, as

everyone has testified prior to this. While

there's a citywide initiative underway to bring

high speed connectivity to all New York over the

next seven years, which could easily turn into ten

plus years, I'm of the belief that this citywide

initiative should not be permitted to stifle the

ability of the local communities to address their

own unique problems with their own creative

solutions. According to my calculations, a

nonprofit, a non-commercial, nonprofit community

networking initiative, which advertises its

construction expenses over five years, provide

gigabit speed connectivity for $20 a month for the

first year, ending at $8 a month the fifth year.

Since the majority of the network expenses are

incurred up front, at the time of construction, it

seems sensible that the subscription cost would

decline over time, as the initial investment was

paid off. DOT revoked full consent process, the

commission would need to install cables in the

streets of New York. As it currently operates,

it's - - complete the cost between $300 and $750

per application. I'd spoken with the DOT

representative informing that nonprofit

organizations, which don't own real estate, who

wish to undertake community network initiatives,

are ineligible to apply for DOT, sorry, that

should be DOT consent, that only individual

building owners and/or their authorized tenants

are eligible. Requiring individual tenants or the

building owners to apply individually imposes a

potentially stifling hurdle on both the community

networks and the workload associated on the DOT.

The DOIT franchise process has been geared towards

very large entities providing citywide or borough

wide service, for the most part. I think DOIT

should consider the ability to have a franchise

process that's geared towards community groups and

associations, so though the letter of the law, in

terms of franchise applications that DOIT's

supposed to an issue an RFP before anyone who can

propose something. During the last two years,

2   we've really only had, to my knowledge, an RFP for

3   whole top installations with wireless, plus

4   everything. And a cable, cable TV franchise.

5   The, the tenant's right to connectivity, a

6   majority of New York City residents and businesses

7   recommend building and to obtain street level

8   access in order to meet a network provider or

9   community network initiative requires them to

10   individually negotiate with their landlords, which

11   is a lengthy and difficult process, that most

12   people don't even try to embark on. If there's a

13   clearly defined right to access the street, then

14   anyone in the building could connect with anyone

15   else in the building, at that street level

16   connection. And anyone could approach the

17   building and provide service into the building.

18   This would probably relieve some of the

19   difficulties that current franchisees have with

20   negotiating rights away in individual properties.

21   The last thing I'll touch upon is public resources

22   in the franchise fibers. Every franchise

23   agreement that involved running a fiber optic

24   cable in the street, the franchisee was required

25   to run a certain percentage of fibers at the

1

2   city's request and to the locations at the city's

3   request. I've issued a Freedom of Information

4   Request to see first of all that the franchisees

5   had been in compliance with their, with their

6   individual franchise agreements. Secondly, to see

7   what the utilization is of this pre-existing

8   network, by some sources I've heard less that 40

9   perfect of the fibers are lit. This could be, you

10 know, I'm not certain, I don't, I'd like to, to

11 know what's available, and at what points the

12 community can make use of that resource that, that

13 we own.

14   MALE VOICE: Thank you, Mr.

15 Glovner, that's very thoughtful testimony, and I'm

16 sure that even in the last speaking position, you

17 may find that you have questions today.

18 Questions.

19   PANELIST: It's an interesting

20 proposal, I'm sure numerous legal hurdles to a lot

21 of it. But you know, this should be discussed.

22 It definitely - - someone has tried to build

23 community efforts in the city. And kind of best

24 shot was to work with anyone other than the city,

25 to work with business improvement districts, to

1

2   work with parks conservancies or other

3   neighborhood level, quasi-governmental groups.

4   There's been a lot of, the franchise laws are

5   definitely geared towards creating a bar that

6   keeps a lot of small businesses, and certainly

7   community based efforts from competing. And I

8   think about the Parks Department's wi-fi franchise

9   from a couple of years ago, which you know, ended

10   up basically selecting a, you know, a start up

11   venture fund that had no real interest in - - .

12   And all the parks that had wi-fi - - dark. NYC

13   Wireless at the time wanted to participate in

14   that, but there were a number of insurance,

15   indemnity and other kinds of hurdles that

16   effectively excluded us even though we had

17   probably the best proven track record of building

18   public wi-fi in the city, so. I mean, NYC

19   Wireless is now the last man standing, and still

20   operating networks throughout the city. So, you

21   know, you sort of wonder - - like that, you know,

22   I like the philosophy in this, which is that this

23   technology's easy, and people show the technology

24   solutions are there, it's creating business models

25   and, you know, telling people that it's there, and

1

2 getting them engaged, and using the community

3 based efforts are clearly the best way to, to do

4 that. So I think there's some real importance

5 here that we should take to heart.

6 　　　　　　　　MALE VOICE: Other questions or

7 comments.

8 　　　　　　　　PANELIST: Just a, just so you're

9 aware, we did issue our last RFP for a citywide

10 build out, and the city's intention there was to

11 direct, run true cable competition across the

12 city, and not leave any community out. So, with,

13 with Verizon looking to come into the market, that

14 RFP was very much geared towards forcing anyone

15 who wanted to come in, to build out the entire

16 city. Our intention now, we're currently

17 renegotiating or we're in renewal negotiations

18 with Time Warner and Cablevision. They're the,

19 the former incumbent monopoly providers. Once we

20 wrap those up, our intention is to release an RFP

21 that would allow smaller entrants to come in and

22 fill niche markets throughout the city. One

23 example of a company that already provides

24 service, though not under a franchise, but to a

25 limited portion of the city, is RCN

1

2 Communications. They provide essentially cable

3 service to parts of Manhattan, and have for many

4 years under an open video systems agreement. So

5 our intention is to allow groups like RCN to enter

6 through what would now be a franchise process,

7 similar to what we've done with the bigger

8 providers. It would again provide the limited

9 build within boroughs, it wouldn't require an

10 overbill to or a build in an entire borough.

11 PANELIST: Are you able to comment

12 on the, this, the state of the FOIA request?

13 LOUIS GLOVNER: Yeah, I actually,

14 this is the first I'm seeing of it. I have to, I

15 can go back and speak to our general counsel's

16 office, who will have, who would have this

17 request, find out where that is. The actually, on

18 the i-net question, I can tell you that I'm not

19 aware of how much we use, but that institutional

20 network does provide our public safety, proceeds

21 with the ability to communicate across the city.

22 So it does serve a very valuable purpose for the

23 city. And we are actually, you know, our former

24 providers, Time Warner and Cablevision, helped us

25 build the original core of that network. What

2   we're doing with Verizon and the i-net agreements

3   that we've received through Verizon, is we're

4   making that network fully reliable and redundant,

5   so that our public safety grade communications can

6   run even more, you know, across the--

7   PANELIST: Yeah. There's a

8   secondary wireless network that was built for

9   security purposes at a cost of $500 million.

10   LOUIS GLOVNER: That - - network

11   you're referring to is separate entirely from i-

12   net. It's actually not predominate, not

13   exclusively a public safety network. That network

14   is being built so that all city agencies,

15   essentially, public safety and public service

16   agencies, all of their logon wireless applications

17   can run on that network.

18   PANELIST: Okay. In 2007, there

19   was a $500 million contract for voice - -

20   MALE VOICE: Actually, excuse me,

21   if I could, if I could actually stop you there.

22   I'd like to make sure that all the questions have

23   been asked of the committee members before

24   continuing the questions in this direction.

25   PANELIST: I just have one quick

1

2 question. Is this based on precedents from other

3 cities that have employed similar schemes, or what

4 the origins of this idea?

5   LOUIS GLOVNER: There, there's a

6 project in - - that was the first attempt, the

7 first pilot project. And it got Utopia, this

8 slightly similar--It's, there's no financial

9 incentive to this. No one makes any money,

10 everyone has great assets, but it's--But, it's--

11 it's merely self-sustaining. So, the amount of,

12 say, research it takes to, to determine what the

13 rights of way are, and, and the various hurdles in

14 the place, you know, in places, you know, there's

15 no financial incentive to, to that. But, then

16 again, the - - companies have monetized and the

17 fire department - - profit. So, there's

18 precedence for systems that don't generate a

19 profit, to - - best way of providing the service.

20   MALE VOICE: Anyone else? Tom?

21   TOMÁS MORALES: Could you tell us

22 about your organization? The Community - -

23 Project.

24   LOUIS GLOVNER: Sure.

25   TOMÁS MORALES: I see your from,

2   the address is New York, New York.

3   LOUIS GLOVNER: Yes.

4   TOMÁS MORALES: You missed the

5   hearing that we had in Manhattan?

6   LOUIS GLOVNER: No. I've been to

7   three of the five.

8   TOMÁS MORALES: You have?

9   LOUIS GLOVNER: So.

10   TOMÁS MORALES: Just tell us, I'd

11   like to know more about your organization.

12   LOUIS GLOVNER: Well, it's a, it's

13   a grassroots move--you know, organization.

14   TOMÁS MORALES: Is it just city,

15   New York City? All five boroughs, or--

16   LOUIS GLOVNER: It's mostly New

17   York City, and the people who are actively working

18   on it are in the city. We have people from other

19   cities, there's someone from Amsterdam, which has

20   been very successful, with its open fiber

21   restructure model. And so, there are people

22   involved outside of New York City, who've had

23   previous experience. For the most part, people

24   who are actively engaged in attempting to push

25   this forward are New York City residents.

2   TOMÁS MORALES: And it's a

3   nonprofit?

4   LOUIS GLOVNER: Yes.

5   TOMÁS MORALES: And how do you get

6   your funding?

7   LOUIS GLOVNER: We do it out of,

8   out of our, it's a passion project.

9   TOMÁS MORALES: Passion project?

10   LOUIS GLOVNER: How do we get our

11   funding? We don't currently require any funding

12   because we're not incurring any direct expenses.

13   The labor expended researching this and filing the

14   FOIA requests, is volunteer. So.

15   TOMÁS MORALES: Thank you.

16   MALE VOICE: Mr. Glovner, thank you

17   very much. And if you care to, the library, as

18   long as you're talking about DOIT proposals, vis-

19   à-vis a - - package.

20   LOUIS GLOVNER: Oh, sure, that

21   would be great. So, essentially, as far as we

22   know, we're now tracking the, what's I guess

23   called the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act,

24   very, very closely, in terms of broadband funds.

25   Of the $4.7 billion that is being allotted for,

what they're calling broadband technology

opportunities program, at a minimum of $250

million are dedicated directly to encourage

sustainable adoption of broadband services. That,

I think, falls very much in line with what we've

really been discussing over the course of the last

year-and-a-half to two years. The city is very

much interested in, in applying for grant monies,

for these purposes, to, to, I think the hope here

is, and it sort of comes out of the work that

we've done, to bring both hardware training and

internet service into long term households, and

long term communities. A real key element of

adoption, as we've, I think, learned throughout

this process, is training. It's getting people

the education that they need to understand the

value in having broadband service in the home. So

that's a really key component, and I think that's

something we want to focus on. In addition to

that, there is a minimum of $200 million which is

going to be dedicated to expand public access

centers. So we've heard a lot about the

libraries, community colleges, high schools, and

other public facilities, that provide internet

access through public access centers. This is a

great opportunity for all of those organizations,

as well as the city, to put out proposals. There

is a, a matching contribution that, from the

municipality or not-for-profit, would have to put

up in order to be eligible for this. But I think

it's a one in five. There is a significant amount

of money that you can get from the government, if

you have a, what could be a fairly minimal

investment. And so, in those two areas, I know,

you know, on DOIT's behalf, the city is actively

pursuing funding through both of those sources for

programs directly tied to the work that's being

done here. And I, you know, certainly for the

not-for-profits that have been here, you know,

it's something that every not-for-profit should

view as an opportunity at this point to engage in,

because I think, you know, this is a once in a

lifetime, once in a million years opportunity.

It's very unlikely you're going to see monies like

this become available from the federal government

any time soon. So, it's something we all want to

take advantage of.

MALE VOICE: Thank you. Do any of

my colleagues have any concluding remarks?

MALE VOICE: I'd just finally like

to thank everyone for coming out today and

participating. It's been, you know, for us,

certainly an educational process. And as always,

I think it's very valuable to get as much

information from the public as possible. And I

think today's been very insightful. And as, as

always, the committee's charge is to take

everything that we've got up here, and in all the

other public hearings, and to sort of really push

the envelop. And I think although the economic

times have changed, we're still presented with a

unique opportunity to move forward and, and

hopefully take advantage of the funding that is

available, and to really have New York City

establish both a, a clear strategy about

broadband, and also really empowering those who

are in the, the underserved areas. So, on behalf

of the committee, I'd like to thank everyone once

again. It's certainly been a pleasure, and thank

you very much.

[applause]
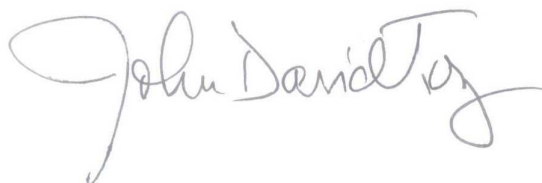
MALE VOICE: And may you all live

2   as long and as well, as Bea Victor.   Thank you.

3   [background noise]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG certify that the foregoing

transcript is a true and accurate record of the

proceedings. I further certify that I am not related

to any of the parties to this action by blood or

marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the

outcome of this matter.

Signature _____

Date MARCH 27, 2009