STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Arkansas House Newsletter

October 27, 2015

STATEWIDE BROADBAND INITIATIVE TO LAUNCH WEDNESDAY

According to the FCC's 2015 Broadband Availability in America Report, 59% of Arkansans are now living in an area where there is no access to highspeed broadband internet.

Arkansas House Speaker Jeremy Gillam and Senate President Pro-Tem Jonathon Dismang have asked the Joint Committee on Advanced Communications and Information Technology to find a way to connect the state and have legislation ready by the 2017 Regular Session.

"Access to broadband impacts our public safety, education, and economic development," said Speaker Gillam. "We have passed over 30 pieces of legislation in recent years to address broadband availability, but progress has been slow and it is time for a more aggressive approach. Senator Dismang and I have been working with members from both sides of the aisle who are committed to making sure we are connected."

The Joint Committee on Advanced Communications and Information Technology will meet at 10am on Wednesday, October 28 in Room A of the MAC building on the grounds of the Capitol to begin the initiative. You can find the agenda at www.arkansashouse.org.

Timeline adopted by Committee

Arkansas Broadband Initiative

Proposed Working Timeline

2015 Launch:

October: Initiative Announced

November: Statewide Broadband Assessment – Where are we currently?

FACT FINDING: 2015-2016

December: Fayetteville / ARE-ON Tour

January: Texarkana

February: Monticello

March: Jonesboro

April: Fiscal Session

May: Little Rock

PLAN DEVELOPMENT:

June – August 2016

FINALIZE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

September – October 2016

Note: *Complete prior to the beginning of budget hearings*