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**\*\* Press Release \*\***

**Congressman Leonard Boswell Held Panel Discussion with ICN**

(Des Moines, Iowa) --Today, U.S. Congressman Leonard Boswell (D) from Iowa's Third Congressional District was in Des Moines and held a panel discussion with representatives on broadband services in Iowa. Congressman Boswell congratulated Iowa Communications Network (ICN) on its recent \$16.2 million federal grant from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP).

"A reliable 21st century communications network is vital for thousands of rural communities to survive and grow," Congressman Boswell said. "I have always fought for federal investment in broadband in Iowa to support our schools, improve public safety and emergency management services, and grow our small business community. This \$16.2 million grant to the Iowa Communications Network will improve public safety and today's discussion was valuable to understanding how these federal dollars will be used."

The panel discussed how ICN's funding will improve broadband connectivity, which will have a significant impact on public safety across Iowa. A presentation was made by Dave Lingren, ICN's Interim Executive Director, explaining the benefits, goals, and potential partnerships relating to ICN's grant.

Dave Lingren, ICN's Interim Executive Director said, "The grant will allow the ICN to seek new ways to not only be an existing asset to benefit Iowa's citizens, but ICN has the potential to partner with the private sector and to take Iowa to the forefront of technology."

Lt. Larry Grant, Department of Public Safety (DPS), demonstrated an application called Mobile Architecture for Communications Handling (MACH). This web-based application is used for cross-jurisdictional data-sharing within law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and public works communities. ICN's grant will enable Iowa Emergency Management to use advanced web-based emergency management applications and provide Iowa's DPS with reliable, statewide, high-speed connections to local law enforcement agencies and public safety access points.

Additional panel participants included Lt. Governor Patty Judge representing her commitment and dedication to Iowa's homeland security activities; Dr. Pamela Duffy on behalf of the Iowa Telecommunication and Technology Commission; and Eugene T. Meyer, Iowa DPS Commissioner.

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In July, ICN was awarded \$16.2 million for broadband infrastructure funding for its “Bridging the Digital Divide for Iowa Communities” grant project from the BTOP. ICN’s project will enhance the Network to a ten (10) Gbps (gigabytes per second) capable backbone that would reach all 99 counties in Iowa. This middle mile network advancement will also provide one (1) Gbps of symmetrical Ethernet connectivity to 1,036 education facilities, hospitals, libraries, public safety, workforce development, and other Community Anchor Institutions throughout the state.

The ICN is the country’s premier fiber-optic network, committed to continued enhancement of distance learning and providing Iowans with equal access to education, healthcare, and government through data, voice, and videoconferencing services. For more information about the ICN, visit [www.icn.state.ia.us](http://www.icn.state.ia.us).

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration, an agency in the U.S. Department of Commerce, was appropriated \$4.7 billion for the BTOP to eligible entities. Guidelines for BTOP, created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), is to expand access to broadband services in the United States by awarding grants for: deploying broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas, enhancing broadband capacity at public computer centers, and promoting sustainable broadband adoption. For more information about BTOP visit [www.broadbandusa.gov](http://www.broadbandusa.gov).

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