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Broadband Advisory Task Force Named

(St. Paul, MN) Minnesota Department of Commerce Commissioner Glenn Wilson today announced the appointment of 15 local business and government leaders to the Minnesota Broadband Advisory Task Force.

The task force will track the state's progress in attaining the goals for broadband established by the legislature during the 2010 session. The goals include the requirement that Minnesota be in the top five states nationally for broadband speed universally available and the top five states for broadband access.

Each member of the task force will serve a two-year term.

The newly-formed task force will submit annual progress reports to the Commissioner by January 1 of each year.

The full list of appointees is as follows:

- JoAnne Johnson (chair) -- manager of government and external relations for Frontier Communications' Central Region States. Prior to joining Frontier, Johnson worked for telecommunications provider Onvoy Inc. and served as an economic development officer for Congressman Collin Peterson.
- Kenneth Wolf (vice-chair) -- a retired resident of Rosemount and former electric reliability administrator at the Department of Commerce. Wolf served in the Minnesota House of Representatives for ten years, including a term as chair of the House Regulated Industries Committee; and spent nine years on the Burnsville City Council. He also has 28 years of experience at Control Data Corp.
- Bob Bass -- president of external and legislative affairs for AT&T in Minnesota. Bass's prior experience includes positions at Nevada Bell, 12 years with the State of Nevada, and service on the Nevada Commission on Educational Technology.
- Brent Christensen -- president and CEO of the Minnesota Telecom Alliance, the state trade association that represents over 80 independent telecommunications companies, more than 100 affiliate telecommunications companies and 250 associate members. Mr. Christensen's prior experience includes serving as vice president/general manager of Christensen Communications Company in Madelia, Minn. and as a deputy sheriff in Travis County, Texas.
- Cindy Kevern -- director of information services for Anoka County. Kevern managed Anoka County's broadband project and with private partner, Zayo Bandwidth, was a recent recipient of broadband stimulus funding which will be used to deploy 286 miles of fiber throughout the county. Prior to joining Anoka County, Kevern worked for Ramsey County for 11 years.

- Todd Kruse -- president of Thought Leadership Management, a public affairs and strategic management consulting firm. He resides in Inver Grove Heights.
- David Lind -- director of information services at Allina Hospitals & Clinics where he provides strategic direction and operational management for 33,000 users in 150 locations. Lind's prior work experience includes positions with Dain Rauscher, MSI Insurance, and Cummins Engine.
- Peter Lindstrom -- mayor of Falcon Heights and a member of the Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA). MHTA's vision is to make Minnesota a world leader for technology-based industry.
- Mike Martin -- executive director of the Minnesota Cable Communications Association, a trade group of companies providing franchised cable television services to communities throughout Minnesota.
- William "Mike" Reardon -- cable communications officer for the City of St. Paul. Reardon has more than 20 years experience at the municipal level with the administration and development of broadband, telecommunications and cable television policy in Minnesota.
- Pete Royer -- director of Little Crow Telemedia Network, which provides bandwidth to 18 school districts in West Central Minnesota. Royer also serves as co-chair of the Minnesota Telecommunications Coordinators, a collection of K-12 regions all with Internet and distance-learning cooperatives.
- Andrew Schriener -- director of government relations for Qwest. Qwest is the largest broadband provider in Minnesota.
- John Schultz -- president of U-reka Broadband Ventures, which provides planning, design and project management to municipalities, competitive and incumbent telecommunications providers. U-reka Broadband Ventures is a partner to at least three projects that have been awarded federal stimulus funding for broadband. Schultz's prior work experience in the telecommunications industry includes positions at FTTH Communications, Seren Innovations, Hickory Tech and Sprint.
- Lois Langer Thompson -- director for the Hennepin County Library system and led the ongoing consolidation of the Hennepin County Library and Minneapolis Public Library. Thompson is also the current chair of the Metropolitan Library Service Agency.
- Shirley Walz -- a senior director of technology at Thomson Reuters. Walz has also participated in the ACE Leadership program sponsored by the Minnesota High Tech Association and has collaborated with the "Gig Group" organized by the City of Eagan to explore broadband build out.