

# Study finds no national consensus for broadband policy

## CostQuest Associates releases state broadband policy survey results

PORTLAND, Ore. – July 21, 2008. CostQuest Associates, a national telecommunications cost consulting and software firm, today released the results of a 50 state survey it conducted in order to better understand the landscape of state policies developed to expand high-speed internet availability.

The survey shows that although most states have undertaken broadband initiatives, there is neither a single national model nor a consensus on best practices.

CostQuest Associates conducted its survey to identify and track efforts in each of the 50 states to achieve broadband ubiquity. The results were unveiled at the Summer Meetings of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.

As a result of federal policy discussions and a growing recognition that broadband telecommunications access can serve as an economic driver, many states have undertaken studies to understand broadband deployment through mapping exercises and/or initiatives to enhance broadband capacity, especially in rural and underserved areas.

Among the key findings, CostQuest learned that at least 39 of the 50 states have some form of broadband initiative in place, either through legislation or through a more informal effort to increase broadband access. However, only 10 of the 50 states have undertaken a definitive broadband mapping effort.

Only a select few have looked at the cost to deploy broadband in the currently unserved areas so as to provide information to encourage private capital as well as delineating the issue to determine if state assistance is needed in uneconomic areas.

“Deploying broadband in underserved areas can be an expensive undertaking, and everyone is looking for the best information possible, including data on where broadband coverage does and does not exist and what the cost to deploy is,” said Jim Stegeman, president of CostQuest Associates. “By surveying what other states are doing, we are able to give federal policy makers a snapshot of how individual states are approaching broadband deployment with limited resources. “

Having found no other current study aggregating such information, CostQuest embarked on an organic approach to gathering this information by surveying as many of the 50 states as possible, and conducting research on the remaining states. CostQuest learned that there is no consensus approach among the states for these initiatives.

“Most states are searching for ‘best practices’ and those currently developing broadband initiatives have taken an ‘a la carte’ approach, selecting elements of programs from other states,” said Stegeman. “Many states are still in the planning stages, but there does not seem to be a one-size-fits all approach.”

### Methodology

CostQuest’s 50-state survey was conducted over a period of 6 weeks from late March 2008, with a deadline for survey respondents of May 1, 2008. Outreach was conducted to each of the state entities with jurisdiction over broadband policy. This jurisdiction ranged from public utility commissions to the legislature and governor’s offices to independently assigned task forces. Where possible, surveys were conducted by phone, although some surveys were completed and returned by email. If no response was received from survey outreach, CostQuest attempted to complete survey responses by conducting research into state level broadband initiatives (if any).

### About CostQuest Associates

CostQuest Associates has over a decade of experience as a leader in providing information systems, economic analytics, and services that deliver comprehensive solutions to complicated business challenges. CostQuest has a global knowledge of costs, business functions, network modeling, telecommunications, economics, regulation and applying the right data to make accurate business decisions. The company’s new service, CQconnect™, provides carriers and policy-makers the ability to move from analysis to action, providing appropriate applications to make broadband deployment decisions. CostQuest Associates has offices in Cincinnati, Ohio and Bellevue, Washington. For more information please visit [www.CostQuest.com](http://www.CostQuest.com)

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# State Broadband Policy Survey Results

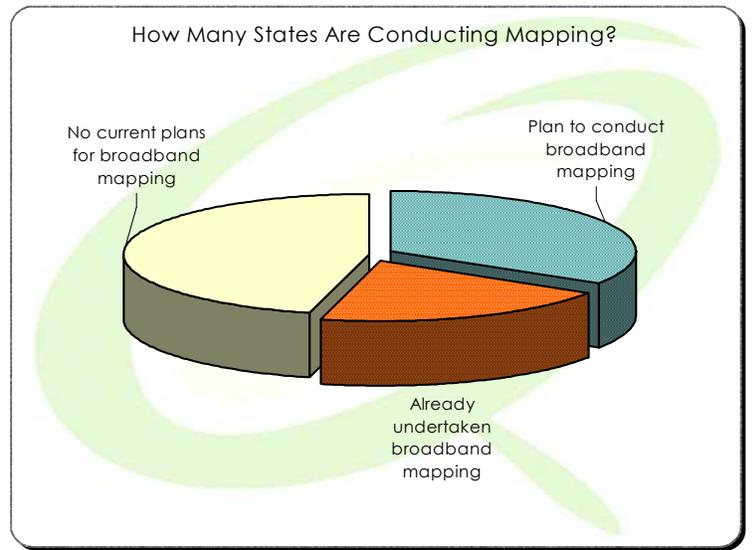
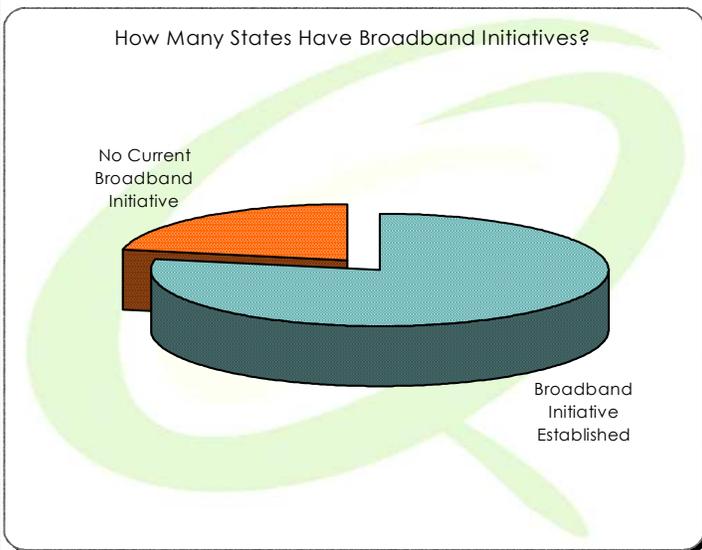


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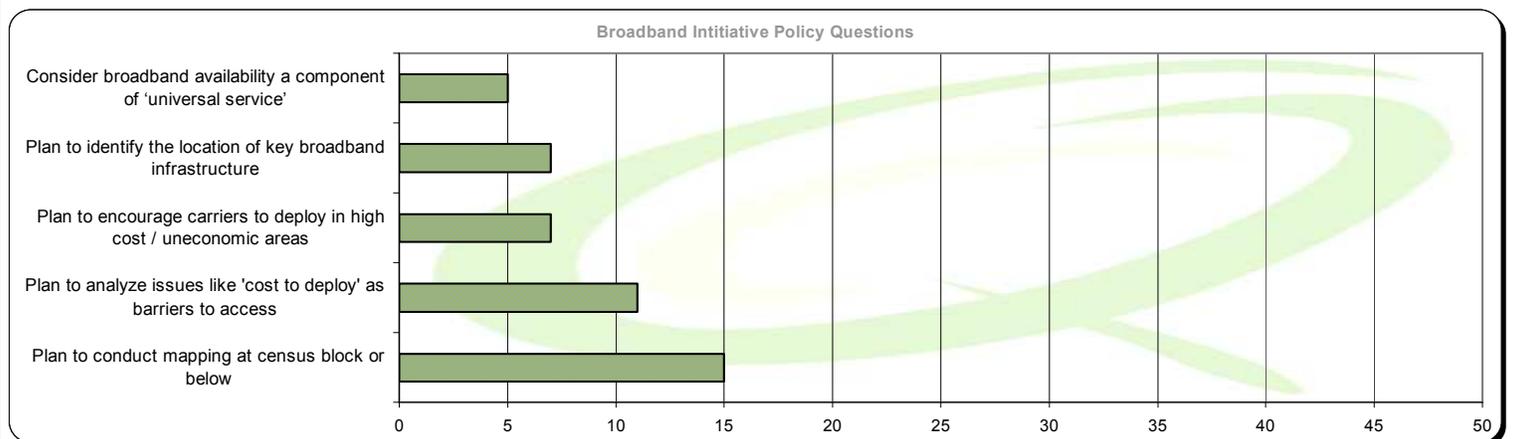
## Results

	no. of states		no. of states
States with some form of broadband initiative	39	Plan to conduct broadband mapping	17
States w/o some form of broadband initiative	11	Already undertaken broadband mapping	10
		No current plans for broadband mapping	23



## Policy Details

	no. of States
States that consider broadband availability a component of 'universal service'	5
States that plan to identify the location of key broadband infrastructure items within the state	7
States that plan to use their Broadband Initiative to encourage carriers to deploy in high cost / uneconomic areas	7
States that have analyzed, or plan to analyze, deployment barriers such as the cost to deploy broadband	11
States that plan to conduct mapping of broadband availability at or below the census block level	15



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