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## **Northwest Pennsylvania Broadband Initiative: Finding Ways to Connect Residents, Schools, Businesses**

**Franklin, PA. (June 5, 2017)** – The Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission is teaming up with Connected Nation to assess the current broadband (high-speed Internet) environment across the region and determine what can be done to improve access for local residents, businesses, and other organizations. On Monday, June 5, the Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Broadband Committee kicked off the first-ever Connected<sup>sm</sup> Community Engagement in the state of Pennsylvania.

“Comprehensive Broadband connectivity is as vital to our region’s economic success as roads and infrastructure were fifty years ago,” Jill Foys, Executive Director of the Northwest Commission, said. “This study will provide the Northwest Pennsylvania region with an understanding of our communications assets as well as its gaps. As an area with an abundance of natural resources and activities that attract young people and families, we need the technological infrastructure to allow them to work where they play.”

Residents, businesses, and other organizations in the Northwest Pennsylvania Region (including counties of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, and Warren) are being asked to take ten minutes to fill out a broadband survey at <http://connectmycommunity.org/northwest-pennsylvania> (a hardcopy version of the residential survey is also available). These surveys will help the Committee understand the status of broadband Internet access, adoption, and use across the region. After a structured assessment of the survey results, the Committee and Connected Nation will then develop a Technology Action Plan that will include specific actions and projects to effectively improve Northwest Pennsylvania’s broadband environment.

“We believe that everyone belongs in a Connected Nation,” said Dan Manning, Connected Nation’s Community Technology Advisor for this project. “To leave a family or business out of the digital world means leaving them out of opportunities for better

education, healthcare, job prospects, and being able to participate in the global economy.”

**To take the survey head to:** <http://connectmycommunity.org/northwest-pennsylvania>.

Please help us increase our survey participation by adding this link to your websites and sharing it on your social media sites.

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**About Connected Nation:** Connected Nation is a leading technology organization committed to bringing affordable high-speed Internet and broadband-enabled resources to all Americans. The Connected Community Engagement is a locally driven effort to live out Connected Nation’s mission to bring access to all families so no one is left on the wrong side of the digital divide.

Connected Nation works with consumers, local community leaders, states, technology providers, and foundations to develop and implement technology expansion programs with core competencies centered on a mission to improve digital inclusion for people and places previously underserved or overlooked. For more information, please visit: [www.connectednation.org/](http://www.connectednation.org/). Follow Connected Nation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).