HB 329

<TARGET><BILL>HB 329</BILL><SUBJECT>HB 329</SUBJECT><COMM>HSTA28</COMM></TARGET>

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

H.B. 329

Collaborative Governance

Request for a Bill Hearing

To: Rep. Bob Lynn, Chair, House State Affairs Committee

From: Rep. Geran Tarr, prime sponsor, H.B. 329

Date: February 24, 2014

As prime sponsor of H.B. 329, I would like to request a hearing on the bill by the House State Affairs Committee. Attached is the most recent version of the bill, the sponsor statement, and supporting documents.

Sincerely,

Geran Tarr

Rep. Geran Tarr

January-May: State Capitol • Juneau, AK 99801-1182 • (907) 465-3424 • Fax (907) 465-3793
June-December: 716 W. 4th Avenue • Anchorage, AK 99501• (907) 269-0144• Fax (907) 269-0148
Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

H.B. 329

"Collaborative Governance"

Sponsor Statement

An increasing number of people are taking advantage of the exponential growth of online social, economic, and political opportunities, to the benefit of our society. For example, youth engaging in online, interest-driven activities are more than five times more likely to become involved in the political process using new media, and are almost twice as likely to vote when they do. Under the collaborative governance proposal, Alaska voters will be encouraged to participate in the legislative process via a means as user-friendly as their social media and interest pages.

This bill allows registered Alaska voters to sign in to the existing Legislative database, BASIS, using their social and professional media accounts. From there, Alaskans could respectfully comment on bills, vote bills up or down, and give their ideas for new legislation or amendments.

There are many people in Alaska with expertise to share, who are not always connected with the decision-makers who need it. Many Legislators' constituents work long and varied hours, and cannot afford to fly to Juneau or participate in middle-of-the-day phone conferences to ensure that their voices are heard. Meanwhile, national data consistently ranks Alaska as having one of the highest rates of internet usage at home, at work, or via public access locations. 2010 data shows that 88.6% of households statewide have internet access from some location. In Anchorage and Fairbanks, this number is 89.4%, while in rural areas, this number reaches 87.3%.Overall, by utilizing online technologies we would see a notable increase in civic participation.

I know that Alaskans care about the future of our state and this is a low cost way to make the legislative process accessible. The crowdsourcing and open-source models led to revolutionary technologies, such as Wikipedia and Linux. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Peer-to-Patent program created a "human database" to assist patent examiners and reduce research time, lifting weight from an overloaded system. These models lead to increased transparency and efficiency and provide a rapid feedback mechanism. Using a collaborative governance model, Legislators can ensure that they are working on issues important to their constituents and make efficient use of their time when reviewing bills or drafting new legislation.

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Table 1. Internet Use at Any Location Ranked by State, 2010

Internet use by individual people aged 3 years and older

Urban areas			Statewide		
Top 10 states	Total people (in thousands)	Percent using internet at any location	Top 10 states	Total people (in thousands)	Percent using internet at any location
Alaska	**431** *	**81.3** %	New Hampshire	1,270	80.3 %
North Dakota	346	80.6	Washington	6,373	79.7
New Hampshire	785	80.2	**Alaska**	**660**	**79.4**
Washington	5,247	79.8	Massachusetts	6,389	78.4
Wisconsin	3,654	79.5	Utah	2,681	78.2
Kansas	1,981	79.2	Connecticut	3,364	78.1
Maine	480	79.1	Wyoming	521	78.0
Minnesota	3,564	78.4	Wisconsin	5,401	77.7
Utah	2,288	78.3	Minnesota	5,001	77.4
Massachusetts	5,804	77.5	Maryland	5,431	77.2

Internet use by anyone in a household

Urban areas			Statewide		
Top 10 states	Total households (in thousands)	Percent using internet at any location	Top 10 states	Total households (in thousands)	Percent using internet at any location
Utah	791	91.1 %	Utah	951	90.1 %
Alaska	**173** *	**89.4**	**Alaska**	**266**	**88.6**
Washington	2,341	88.6	Washington	2,782	88.4
Kansas	866	87.9	New Hampshire	526	86.4
Oregon	1,210	86.8	Oregon	1,554	86.2
New Hampshire	335	86.1	Kansas	1,152	84.8
Wyoming	130	85.3	Wyoming	228	84.3
Nebraska	516	85.2	Nevada	1,012	84.3
Idaho	400	85.0	California	12,935	84.2
California	12,285	84.4	Idaho	584	84.1

* "Urban areas" in Alaska included only Anchorage and Fairbanks. For rural areas, Alaska was ranked 11th for Internet use by individual people (75.9% used the Internet out of a population of 229,000) and 5th in Internet use by anyone in a household (87.3% used the Internet out of 93,000 households).

Source of data: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, "Percent of People Who Use the Internet at Any Location, Ranked by State, 2010, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/data/CSP2010_Tables.html

Table 2. States with Highest Percentage of Reported Internet Usage for Individuals 3 Years and Older, 2009

	Total population (in thousands)	Individual accesses the internet from some location*		Individual lives in household with Internet access	
		N	%	N	%
New Hampshire	1,262	953	75.5 %	1,069	84.7 %
Alaska	630	499	79.2	526	83.5
Utah	2,630	2,049	77.9	2,186	83.1
New Jersey	8,258	6,132	74.3	6,853	83.0
Connecticut	3,324	2,500	75.2	2,726	82.0
Massachusetts	6,237	4,641	74.4	5,095	81.7
Oregon	3,660	2,763	75.5	2,951	80.6
Hawaii	1,215	819	67.4	959	78.9
Wisconsin	5,341	4,000	74.9	4,207	78.8
Minnesota	4,982	3,790	76.1	3,875	77.8
Colorado	4,726	3,537	74.8	3,599	76.2

* "Some location" means Internet access that occurs either inside or outside the householder's home.

Source of data: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2009

Table 3. U.S. Children Aged 5–17 Using the Internet In and Outside the Home, 2010

Age	Total persons aged 5 or older (in thousands)	Internet use in the home		Internet use anywhere*	
		N	%	N	%
5–9 years	20,839	9,642	46.3 %	11,165	53.6 %
10–13 years	16,110	11,095	68.9	12,738	79.1
14–17 years	16,982	13,169	77.5	14,999	88.3
Total	**53,931**	**33,906**	**62.9**	**38,902**	**72.1**

* "Anywhere" means Internet access that occurs either inside or outside the householder's home.

Source of data: "Table 1. Persons using the Internet in and outside the home," National Telecommunications and Information Administration, January 2011, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/data/CPS2010Tables/t11_1.txt

Alaska's Resources

The Alaska Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC) was created as a satellite task force of the Seattle ICAC in 1998. Alaska ICAC became a full-fledged task force in 2008 following several high profile cases. In Alaska, the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force contact is located at the Anchorage Police Department which submits reports and statistics to the U.S. Department of Justice, the ICAC funding agency. The Alaska task force meets regularly to discuss trends and cases, and member agencies often work jointly on cases. The Alaska ICAC is comprised of representatives from the police departments in Anchorage, Kenai, Soldotna, Kodiak, Juneau, Fairbanks, and Palmer, as well as individuals from the Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Department of

U.S. Internet Use Sees Dramatic Growth

Alaska has highest usage

By Mike Sachoff · June 3, 2009 · 0 Comments

[Technology] More than half (62%) of households in the U.S. had Internet access in 2007, an 18 percent increase from 1997, according to new data from the Census Bureau.

Sixty-four percent of individuals 18 and over used the Internet from any location in 2007, while only 22 percent did so in 1997. Among households using the Internet in 2007, 82 percent used a high-speed connection, and 17 percent used a dial-up connection.

"As access to high speed connections have become more prevalent, so too have the number of people that connect to the Internet at home," said Thom File, a statistician with the Census Bureau Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division.

"These data give us a better understanding of who is using the Internet and from where."

Broken down by states, Alaska and New Hampshire residents had among the highest rates of Internet use from any location (home, work or public access) for those 3 and older in 2007.

Mississippi and West Virginia had among the lowest rates of Internet use at about 52 percent.

Internet usage also varied by education. For those 25 and older with a bachelor's degree, 87 percent reported going online from any location in 2007. For those with some college, 74 percent reported using the Internet. Nearly half (49%) of those with a high school diploma reported using the Internet, compared with 19 percent for those without a high school diploma.

When looking at age groups, the percentage of 18- to 34-year olds who accessed the Internet was more than double (73%) that of people 65 and older (35%). Among children 3 to 17, 56 percent used the Internet.

Reported Internet Usage for Individuals 3 Years and Older, by State: 2007
Current Population Survey (CPS) October 2007 (In thousands)

State	Total	Individual accesses the Internet from some location [1]		Individual lives in household with Internet Access	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
United States	285,410	177,387	62.4	191,520	67.1
Alabama	4,365	2,334	53.5	2,412	55.3
Alaska	620	472	76.1	487	78.5
Arizona	6,017	3,696	61.4	3,805	63.2
Arkansas	2,662	1,412	53.1	1,475	55.4
California	34,717	21,144	60.9	23,953	69.0
Colorado	4,568	3,078	67.4	3,293	72.1
Connecticut	3,330	2,250	67.6	2,480	74.5
Delaware	816	539	66.1	580	71.0
District of Columbia	541	357	65.9	339	62.6
Florida	17,485	10,858	62.1	12,155	69.5
Georgia	8,942	5,574	62.3	5,923	66.2
Hawaii	1,213	713	58.8	860	70.9
Idaho	1,403	806	57.4	866	61.7
Illinois	12,213	8,115	66.4	8,460	69.3
Indiana	6,012	3,710	61.7	3,957	65.8
Iowa	2,825	1,883	66.7	1,931	68.3
Kansas	2,587	1,733	67.0	1,711	66.1
Kentucky	4,006	2,372	59.2	2,438	60.9
Louisiana	4,061	2,327	57.3	2,534	62.4
Maine	1,268	864	68.2	922	72.7
Maryland	5,341	3,597	67.4	3,825	71.6
Massachusetts	6,141	4,170	67.9	4,686	76.3
Michigan	9,629	6,234	64.7	6,310	65.5
Minnesota	4,928	3,604	73.1	3,631	73.7
Mississippi	2,745	1,413	51.5	1,450	52.8
Missouri	5,522	3,394	61.5	3,519	63.7
Montana	905	585	64.6	593	65.5
Nebraska	1,664	1,112	66.8	1,170	70.3
Nevada	2,439	1,574	64.5	1,681	68.9
New Hampshire	1,268	946	74.6	1,047	82.6
New Jersey	8,349	5,510	66.0	6,181	74.0
New Mexico	1,883	1,090	57.9	1,154	61.3
New York	18,405	10,858	59.0	12,478	67.8
North Carolina	8,484	4,958	58.4	5,193	61.2
North Dakota	594	405	68.2	407	68.5
Ohio	10,877	6,842	62.9	7,178	66.0
Oklahoma	3,364	1,937	57.6	1,946	57.8
Oregon	3,579	2,391	66.8	2,587	72.3
Pennsylvania	11,770	7,523	63.9	8,081	68.7
Rhode Island	1,005	653	64.9	734	73.0
South Carolina	4,139	2,341	56.6	2,463	59.5
South Dakota	732	489	66.8	495	67.6
Tennessee	5,768	3,334	57.8	3,367	58.4
Texas	22,408	12,419	55.4	13,519	60.3
Utah	2,449	1,758	71.8	1,832	74.8
Virginia	7,181	4,808	67.0	5,247	73.1
Vermont	599	407	68.0	450	75.2
Washington	6,108	4,486	73.4	4,623	75.7
West Virginia	1,722	911	52.9	974	56.5
Wisconsin	5,288	3,651	69.3	3,784	71.8
Wyoming	494	349	70.7	339	68.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2007.
Internet Release date: June 2009

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About Mike Sachoff
Mike is a staff writer for WebProNews. Google+
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New Data Ranks Internet Usage by State – Where Does Your State Stand?

Posted July 19, 2012
By Chris McGovern

Earlier this week, the U.S. Census Bureau released new data (http://www.census.gov/hhes/computer/publications/2010.html) on computer and Internet use from the 2010 Census. Nationally, nearly 70.3 million Americans (or about 24.1%) didn't subscribe to home Internet service in 2010, according to this report. This includes more than 13 million children age 3-17.

Nationally, 75.9% of households subscribe to home Internet service. New Hampshire tops the 50 states and the District of Columbia, with 86.2% of residents subscribing to home Internet service. Utah follows closely behind with 85.5% of residents, with the states of Washington (83.6%), Massachusetts (83.4%), and Connecticut (83.0%) rounding out the top five. Among the states served by Connected Nation, Alaska had the largest share of residents with home Internet service, followed by Nevada and Minnesota.

Home Internet Adoption Rates

State (national rank)	2010 Census	2011 Residential Technology Assessment
Alaska (6)	82.1%	83%
Florida (30)	76.6%	80%
Iowa (31)	76.3%	72%
Michigan (32)	75.7%	71%
Minnesota (17)	79.2%	80%
Nevada (11)	80.5%	77%
Ohio (39)	72.4%	74%
South Carolina (45)	67.4%	66%
Tennessee (43)	69.4%	72%
Texas (41)	71.6%	73%

These figures are similar to data collected through these states' 2011 Residential Technology Assessments (http://www.connectednation.org/survey-results/residential). An important distinction is that the U.S. Census reports the share of residents who live in homes with Internet access, which can include either dial-up or broadband service.

Do these rankings surprise you? Did you expect your state's Internet adoption rate to be higher (or lower) than the Census reported? Let us know how you feel in the comments below, and follow us on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/ConnectedNation) or Twitter (https://twitter.com/connectednation/) to stay up to date on the latest news on technology adoption and usage.

Comments

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participatory politics

New Media and Youth Political Action

Cathy J. Cohen
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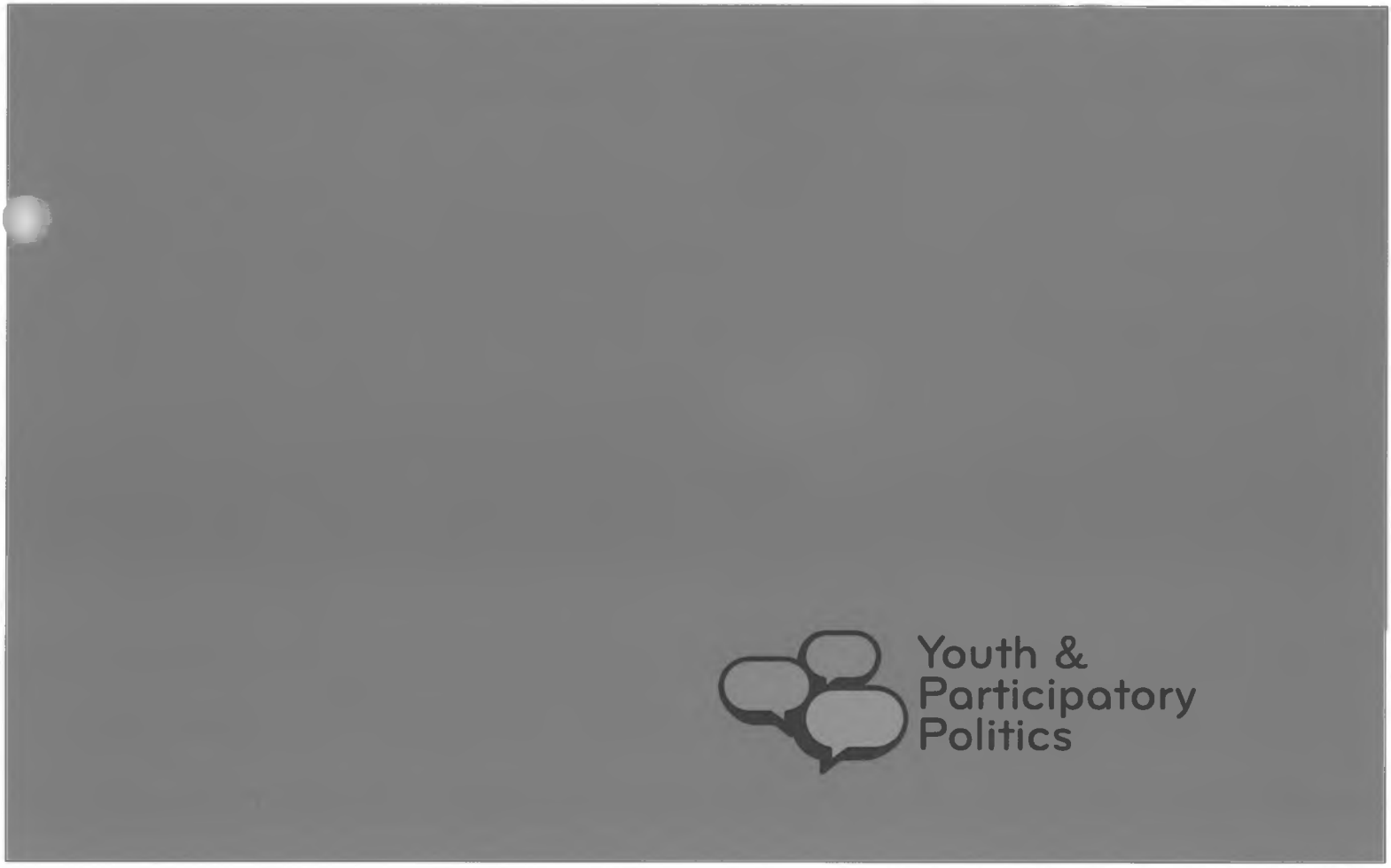
Ellen Middaugh, Mills College
Jon Rogowski, University of Chicago

June, 2012



About Us: *The YPPSP (Youth & Participatory Politics Survey Project) research team led by Cathy Cohen and Joseph Kahne is a project of the MacArthur Research Network on Youth & Participatory Politics (YPP). The YPP network is made up of eight scholars—Danielle Allen, Cathy Cohen, Howard Gardner, Joseph Kahne, Mimi Ito, Henry Jenkins, Elisabth Soep, and Ethan Zuckerman—working at the intersection of youth public sphere engagement and digital media use. For more detail on YPP's research projects see* ***http://ypp.dmlcentral.net/****. The YPP Network, funded under the MacArthur Foundation's Digital Media and Learning Initiative, is also part of the DML Research Hub. For more on DML see* ***http://dmlcentral.net/.***

Acknowledgements: *We are enormously grateful for all the support we received in conducting this study and writing this report. We are especially grateful for the guidance and feedback we received from other members of the MacArthur Research Network on Youth and Participatory Politics: Danielle Allen, Howard Gardner, Mimi Ito, Henry Jenkins, Lissa Soep, and Ethan Zuckerman. We also greatly value the insight and assistance from Jeff Brazil, Chris Evans, Sandra Mistretti, John Rogers and Joel Westheimer, Geoffrey Knox & Associates, and An-Me Chung and Connie Yowell of the MacArthur Foundation. The generous support we received from the MacArthur Foundation enabled this work to take place. Of course, full responsibility for the content of this report rests with the authors.*

Published by the Youth and Participatory Politics Research Network.
Oakland, CA. June 2012.

A full-text PDF of this report is available as a free download from:
http://ypp.dmlcentral.net/sites/all/files/publications/YPP_Survey_Report_FULL.pdf

[cover photo: Cell Phone Freedom by Nicolas Will http://www.flickr.com/photos/numbs1r/2402670541]

participatory politics

New Media and Youth Political Action

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**Cathy J. Cohen and Joseph Kahne are co-principal investigators and contributed equally to the writing of this report.*

June, 2012

★★ contents ★★

executive summary

Over a period of just three days in October 2011, 75,000 people signed a petition started by 22-year-old Molly Katchpole on Change.org to protest Bank of America's proposed $5.00 debit card fee. Ultimately, over 300,000 people signed and more than 21,000 pledged to close their Bank of America accounts. The movement attracted national attention, and Bank of America reversed its decision to charge customers.

"We're in the business of amplifying. We're trying to change the balance of power between individuals and large organizations."

—Ben Rattray, thirty-one-year-old founder of Change.org

In December 2011, Internet users and activists worked together to defeat the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA). Purportedly designed to thwart Internet copyright infringement and intellectual property theft, SOPA enjoyed strong bipartisan support in the House and Senate and was backed by powerful lobbying forces in Washington DC. But then hundreds of websites participated in a synchronized Internet blackout in protest of the legislation, complemented by blog posts, videos, and posts and discussions in forums on an array of websites, organized largely by youth. All of this sent a single message: the pending legislation would undermine Internet freedom and invite widespread censorship. Within days, Congress responded and the legislation was blocked. In the aftermath, the Pew Foundation found that young people under the age of thirty followed protests over SOPA more closely than news about the presidential election.

"I think it is an important moment in the Capitol. This is individual citizens rising up."

— Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), quoted in The New York Times

On September 17, 2011, responding to a blog post and circulated e-mail calling for a peaceful protest and "occupation" of Wall Street by the Canadian-based magazine *Adbusters*, and inspired by international protests from Egypt to London, hundreds of mostly young people took to the streets surrounding the financial district in New York City. The protesters eventually set up a now-famous camp in nearby Zucotti Park. While the Occupy movement will be known for reinstating the topic of inequality back onto the national agenda, it was also successful in raising money. According to the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, the movement raised $454,000 during its first month of activity largely "from some 8000 online donors and other supporters." While Occupy encampments have been torn down and vibrant discussion of class warfare has faded, what does continue is the potential for people—in particular, young people—to organize independently of elites and elite institutions using new media and social media platforms. But the question remains: How important and long-lasting is the role that new media may play in the reorganization of young people's lives and politics?

NEW DATA FOR UNDERSTANDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S POLITICS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The Occupy movement, stopping SOPA, and the power of six million users of Change.org are only three of many examples of how new media impact politics in America, especially as politics are practiced among young people. The Obama campaign's use of social media in 2008 helped to produce record turnout, especially among young blacks and Latinos. In the 2012 elections, all those involved in campaigns are relying more heavily than ever before on social media. The intersection of youth, new media, and politics is not exclusively a U.S. story, however. As recent movements from Tunisia to Egypt to Russia indicate, the significance of new media's impact on political expression is international in scope.

[United by Keoki Seu http://www.flickr.com/photos/keokiseu/5152493871]

★★ *defining* ★★ participatory politics

The Youth and Participatory Politics study defines participatory politics as interactive, peer-based acts through which individuals and groups seek to exert both voice and influence on issues of public concern. Importantly, these acts are not guided by deference to elites or formal institutions. Examples of participatory political acts include starting a new political group online, writing and disseminating a blog post about a political issue, forwarding a funny political video to one's social network, or participating in a poetry slam. Participatory political acts can:

★ **reach large audiences and *mobilize* networks, often online, on behalf of a cause;**

★ **help *shape agendas* through *dialogue* with, and provide *feedback* to, political leaders (on- and offline); and**

★ **enable participants to exert *greater agency* through the *circulation* or forwarding of political information (e.g., links) as well as through the *production* of original content, such as a blog or letter to the editor.**

Four factors make participatory politics especially important to those thinking about the future of American politics.

1. Participatory politics allow individuals to operate with greater independence in the political realm, circumventing traditional gatekeepers of information and influence, such as newspaper editors, political parties, and interest groups.

2. Participatory politics often facilitate a renegotiation of political power and control with the traditional political entities that are now searching for ways to engage participants. Witness how newspapers and cable television stations now try to facilitate a controlled engagement with their audience through the use of social media.

3. Participatory politics as practiced online provide for greater creativity and voice, as participants produce original content using video, images, and text.

4. Participatory politics afford individuals the capability to reach a sizable audience and mobilize others through their social networks in an easy and inexpensive manner.

These practices are focused on expression and are peer based, interactive, and nonhierarchical, and they are not guided by deference to elite institutions. The pervasive presence of such practices in the lives of young people is creating an actual culture shift. The participatory skills, norms, and networks that develop when social media is used to socialize with friends or to engage with those who share one's interests can and are being transferred to the political realm.

To rigorously consider the impact of new media on the political and civic behavior of young people, The MacArthur Research Network on Youth and Participatory Politics (YPP) developed and fielded one of the first large-scale, nationally representative studies of new media and politics among young people. The two principal researchers for the survey component of the YPP, Cathy J. Cohen of the University of Chicago and Joseph Kahne of Mills College, oversaw a research team that surveyed nearly 3,000 respondents between the ages of 15 and 25 years of age. Unlike any prior study of youth and new media, this study included large numbers of black, Latino, and Asian American respondents, which allows for unique and powerful statistical comparisons across race with a focus on young people.

Until now there has been limited opportunity and data available to comprehensively explore the relationship between new media and the politics of young people. One of the few entities to engage in this type of rigorous analysis has been the Pew Internet and American Life Project. The YPP study expands on this field-leading work by including an extensive battery of items addressing participatory politics and adequate numbers of participants from different racial and ethnic groups, thus allowing for analysis of how different groups of young people were engaged with new media in the political realm.

The YPP study findings suggest that fundamental changes in political expectations and practices may be occurring—especially for youth. The analysis of the data collected reveals that youth are taking advantage of an expanded set of participatory practices in the political realm in ways that amplify their voice and sometimes their influence, thus increasing the ways young people participate in political life. The YPP researchers label this expanded set of opportunities and actions *participatory politics*.

The YPP study, summarized in this executive summary and presented in full in a longer report available online at http://dmlcentral.net/resources/5058, presents important new information about the different trajectories of new media uptake in the United States and its use in the political realm across different groups of young people. It measures the online participatory practices of young people in their social lives, as well as youth engagement with more traditional forms of social and political interaction.

While the topic of new media and youth politics has garnered lots of attention from pundits, politicians, and journalists, these reports often focus on anecdotal or single-case examples of a protest mobilization where new media played an important role. To date, there has been limited opportunity and data available to explore the relationship between new media and the political action of young people in a more comprehensive manner. This new survey data provide a strong basis for five major findings, summarized as follows.

1. ***Large proportions of young people across racial and ethnic groups have access to the Internet and use online social media regularly to stay connected to their family and friends and pursue interests and hobbies.***

   Contrary to the traditional notion of a technological digital divide, the YPP study finds young people across racial and ethnic groups are connected online.
   - Overwhelmingly, white (96 percent), black (94 percent), Latino (96 percent), and Asian American (98 percent) youth report having access to a computer that connects to the Internet.
   - A majority or near-majority of white (51 percent), black (57 percent), Latino (49 percent), and Asian American (52 percent) youth report sending messages, sharing status updates and links, or chatting online daily.

   Youth are very involved in friendship-driven and interest-driven activities online.
   - 78 percent send messages, share status updates, or chat online on a weekly basis.
   - 58 percent share links or forward information through social networks at least once a week.
   - On a weekly basis, roughly one-third engage in particular interest-driven activities, such as posting, linking to, or forwarding information; giving help, advice, or suggestions to others; or posting comments online about someone else's media.
   - About one in six engage in more active self-expression such as organizing an online group or discussion, starting a website, or creating original media to share online.
   - Overall, 64 percent engage in at least one interest-driven activity in a given week, and 32 percent engage in three or more activities a week.

2. ***Participatory politics are an important dimension of politics.***
   - 41 percent of young people have engaged in at least one act of participatory politics, while 44 percent participate in other acts of politics.

★★ key data ★★

Participatory politics are an important dimension of politics:

- 41 percent of young people engage in at least one act of participatory politics, while 44 percent participate in other acts of politics.
- Specifically, 43 percent of white, 41 percent of black, 38 percent of Latino, and 36 percent of Asian American youth participated in at least one act of participatory politics during the prior 12 months.

Participatory politics are an addition to an individual's engagement rather than an alternative to other political activities:

- Youth who engaged in at least one act of participatory politics were almost twice as likely to report voting in 2010 as those who did not.
- A large proportion—37 percent of all young people—engages in both participatory and institutional politics.
- Among young people who engage in participatory policies, 90 percent of them either vote or engage in institutional politics.

Participatory politics are equitably distributed across different racial and ethnic groups:

- Contrary to the traditional notion of a technological digital divide, the YPP study finds that overwhelmingly, white (96 percent), black (94 percent), Latino (96 percent) and Asian American (98 percent) youth report having access to a computer that connects to the Internet.
- The difference in voting in 2008 between the group with the highest rate of turnout according to the U.S. Census Bureau—black youth (52%)—and the group with the lowest rate of turnout—Latino youth (27%)—is 25 percentage points.
- In contrast, the difference between the group with the highest rate of engaging in at least one act of participatory politics—whites (43 percent)—and the groups with the lowest rate of engaging in at least one act of participatory politics—Asian Americans (36 percent)—is only 7 percentage points.

Taking into account participatory politics, institutional politics, and voting, black youth are the most likely to have participated in at least one form of these activities:

- Engagement is highest among black youth, with only 25 percent reporting no engagement in any form of political behavior, compared with 33 percent of whites, 40 percent of Asian Americans, and 43 percent of Latinos.

Youth get news through participatory channels but believe they would benefit from learning how to judge the credibility of what they find online:

- Youth now consume news through participatory channels. 45 percent of youth reported getting news at least once a week from family and friends via Twitter or Facebook feeds. This rivals the 49 percent who got news at least once in the past week from newspapers or magazines.
- Survey respondents were asked, "Do you think people like you and your friends would benefit from learning more about how to tell if news and information you find online is trustworthy?," and 84 percent said "yes."

- Specifically, 43 percent of white, 41 percent of black, 38 percent of Latino, and 36 percent of Asian American youth have participated in at least one act of participatory politics during the prior 12 months.

Participatory politics are better viewed as an addition to an individual's engagement than as an alternative to other political activities.

- Youth who engaged in at least one act of participatory politics were almost twice as likely to report voting in 2010 as those who did not.
- A large proportion—37 percent of all young people—engages in *both* participatory and institutional politics.
- Among young people who engage in participatory politics, 90 percent of them either vote or take part in institutional politics.

Participatory politics, however, are different than merely taking institutional political activities (e.g., participating in a campaign) and moving them online. Allowing individuals to donate to a candidate online does not make the political act of donating money a participatory act. Today, online politics frequently resemble what we have traditionally seen in the political realm and often is not particularly participatory. YPP researchers are less interested in whether various political activities occur online or offline, but are interested, instead, in the participatory norms, values, and practices of political engagement.

3. ***Interest-driven online activities appear to lay a foundation for engagement in participatory politics through the development of "digital social capital."***

Those using new media to pursue interests and hobbies from sports to technology to gaming may be gaining knowledge, skills, and networks, that is, ***digital social capital,*** which makes engaging in participatory politics more likely.

- Youth who were highly involved in nonpolitical, interest-driven activities are more than *five times* as likely to engage in participatory politics and nearly *four times* as likely to participate in all political acts, compared with those infrequently involved in such activities.

Encompassed within this digital social capital is the important element of networks. While similar to networks of the past, which played a crucial role in politics and social movements, such as the civil rights movement, the YPP data suggest that the role and possibility of networks in a digital era are different in three key ways:

- Circulating materials to those we know as well as to those whom we have never met is much easier through social media.
- Social media affords the ability to circulate customized political expressions.
- The process of customization and creation of material allows for a freedom with regard to defining what actually counts as "politics." Among friends, political information and political action may originate from a variety sources and are not strictly defined by political elites.

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Participatory politics are a significant dimension of the political life of young people... giving them greater control, voice, and potentially influence over the issues that matter most in their lives.

As Henry Jenkins has written, online contexts may well be the bowling leagues of the twenty-first century. They provide a space of connection to others where trust is built and deliberation happens. Like the bowling league, online contexts can facilitate social exchange where collective identities can be built and mobilized for civic and political engagement.

4. ***New media has the potential to facilitate an equitable distribution of political participation among young people from different racial and ethnic groups.***

Participatory politics are generally equitably distributed across different racial and ethnic groups.

- The difference in voting in 2008 between the group with the highest rate of turnout according to the U.S. Census Bureau—black youth (52%)—and the group with the lowest rate of turnout—Latino youth (27%)—is 25 percentage points.
- In contrast, the difference between the group with the highest rate of engaging in at least one act of participatory politics—whites (43 percent—and the groups with the lowest rate of engaging in at least one act of participatory politics—Asian Americans at (36 percent—is only 7 percentage points.

Taking into account participatory politics, institutional politics, and voting, black youth are the most likely to have participated in at least one form of these political activities, contradicting the common assumption that white youth are the most engaged in the political realm.

- Engagement is highest among black youth, with only 25 percent reporting no engagement in any form of political behavior, compared with 33 percent of whites, 40 percent of Asian Americans, and 43 percent of Latinos.

Black and Asian American youth are more likely to engage in friendship and interest-driven activity.

- On average black youth are more likely to engage in friendship-driven activity.
- Black and Asian American youth are significantly more likely to engage in interest-driven activity than are white and Latino youth.
- These differences hold up even when income is taken into account and controlled for.

The data on the distribution of political participation raise important questions about how the political landscape might change in the future, given both the growing influence of new media in the lives of young people and the changing demographics of the country. While youth of color are active online and engaged in friendship- and interest-driven activities as well as some forms of participatory politics, they will need infrastructure and interventions to leverage their proficiencies in the digital world to their benefit in the political realm.

5. ***Many youth get news through participatory channels but believe they would benefit from learning how to judge the credibility of what they find online.***
   - Youth now consume a great deal of news through participatory channels. Forty-five percent of youth reported getting news at least once a week from family and friends via Twitter or Facebook. In addition, 21 percent said they received news from blogs or YouTube posts devoted to political and social topics, and 22 percent reported getting news or information from an online community where people discuss a hobby, sport, or fandom.
   - This rivals the 49 percent who reported receiving news at least once in the past week from newspapers or magazines.

Youth recognize the challenge of judging the credibility of the information they receive through these media.

- Survey respondents were asked, "Do you think people like you and your friends would benefit from learning more about how to tell if news and information you find online is trustworthy?," and 84 percent said "yes."

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS: REALIZING THE POTENTIAL OF PARTICIPATORY POLITICS

The analysis of data from the YPP study shows that participatory politics are worthy of substantial attention and that these practices present both risks and opportunities for the full, equitable, and productive engagement of youth in the political realm.

Participatory politics provide a substantial opportunity to reinvigorate both youth politics and political life in general. Forty-one percent of youth ages 15 to 25 engaged in at least one form of participatory politics. These acts of participatory politics occur at rates that parallel many institutionally based activities, such as contributing to a political party, attending a meeting or campaign event, wearing a campaign button, or signing a petition. Focusing on participatory politics, therefore, is important for anyone concerned about the politics of young people and, more broadly, about the future of politics in the United States and abroad.

Participatory politics are an important avenue to provide young people with a level of voice and control not often seen in the realm of institutional politics. As confidence in elected officials is at historic lows (13 percent said they approved of the job Congress was doing in a recent poll), participatory politics may provide a set of practices through which young people can communicate their political commitments and instincts directly to those most relevant in their lives—family and friends.

While self-expression through participatory politics does not guarantee that one will have influence, news reports over the past several years have been filled with examples of how participatory politics have influenced policy debates and changed governmental and corporate policies.

Almost every major campaign now employs strategies that aim to tap the potential of participatory politics. The attempt of conventional political campaigns to capture and exploit the power of participatory politics was evident in

2008 when then-candidate Obama and his supporters used new media to connect with and mobilize young voters. Despite common assumptions regarding a "digital divide," the YPP study found that participatory political activities are more equitably distributed than voting. So these practices may provide a valuable access point for those who are hoping to amplify marginalized voices, especially those of youth of color, in a democratic system.

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A turn to new media is not a turn away from offline activity. Rather, it is essential to recognize and highlight the integration of these two domains in the lives of young people.

Participatory politics clearly present risks as well as opportunities. While it is true that participatory politics are more equitably distributed than voting, some formidable inequalities and challenges still exist.

- Substantial portions of youth are far less likely than others to have voice and influence. Interventions aimed at leveraging the full potential of participatory politics cannot focus solely on schools, especially colleges, if all youth are to be included.
- The potential for misinformation has never been greater. Youth, to a degree never before seen, are inundated with information. At the same time, the vast majority (84 percent) reports that they and their peers would benefit from help judging the credibility of what they see online.
- Attending to participatory political activity may obscure the fact that youth political engagement is the exception and not the rule. While the YPP study has vivid examples of youth using digital media to meaningfully engage in varied forms of political and social change, it is clear from the study's data and a substantial number of previous studies that most youth are not engaged in institutional or participatory politics.
- There is, finally, the risk that proponents of participatory politics, including youth themselves, will fail to focus on the distinction between voice and influence. YPP researchers do not want to undervalue the significance of voice, especially for youth who are in the process of developing their political identities. At the same time, the YPP study recognizes that the promise of a democratic society is predicated on the belief that political actors have more than voice—they must also have influence.

IMPLICATIONS

When it comes to youth engagement with participatory politics, the presence of risks as well as opportunities makes clear the need for action in this fast-changing arena.

- Broadening the focus of policymakers, parents, the press, educators, scholars, funders, and other stakeholders to focus on participatory politics when engaging in their work is essential if we are to understand the current state of political life and act in ways that support the quality, quantity, and equality of political engagement.
- It is essential to identify priorities and create infrastructure and supports for individuals and organizations to more fully tap into the potential of these practices. Clearly, the digital era expands the need for media literacy. Youth must learn how to judge the credibility of online information and find divergent views on varied issues.
- Youth may benefit from supports in formal and informal educational settings that strengthen their ability and desire to produce media that is informed, persuasive, and distributed effectively.
- Organizations hoping to tap the full potential of this new domain will benefit from opportunities to learn about and reflect on the impact of varied strategies for leveraging the potential of participatory politics. A turn to new media is not a turn away from offline activity. Rather, it is essential to recognize and highlight the integration of these two domains in the lives of young people.
- Promoting broad and equitable access to the support and infrastructure youth need to move from voice to influence will be important in order for participatory politics to reach its full potential.

Participatory politics are a significant dimension of the political life of young people. The risks as well as the positive potential require careful attention. This is a unique and important moment. If stakeholders at multiple levels provide appropriate supports, participatory politics may provide valuable opportunities to engage young people in the political realm, giving them greater control, voice, and potentially influence over the issues that matter most in their lives.

Full publication available at:

http://ypp.dmlcentral.net/sites/default/files/publications/Participatory_Politics_New_Media_and_Youth_Political_Action.2012.pdf

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Wiki-Government

How open-source technology can make government decision-making more expert and more democratic.

Beth Simone Noveck

George Bernard Shaw once wrote, "All professions are conspiracies against the laity," and nowhere is this more the case than in a democracy. Although political legitimacy demands accountability to an electoral process, those living in a democracy readily submit to what sociologist Michael Schudson calls the "permanent embarrassment" of expertise. We believe that administrative governance by a professional elite is the best way to organize decision-making in the public interest. Experts decide on acceptable levels of mercury emissions in the air, anti-discrimination rules in education and the workplace, and the standards for cross-ownership of newspapers and broadcasting stations.

The justification for this professional decision-making, articulated by theorists ranging from Max Weber to Walter Lippmann, is that while citizens can express personal opinions based on values, they are incapable of making fact-based decisions on matters of policy. For Weber, the complexities of modern governance call for "the personally detached and strictly objective expert." Only institutionalized and governmental professionals possess the expertise, resources, discipline, and time to make public-policy decisions. And citizen participation is hard to organize and administer, and even harder to scale. It is one thing for 10 bureaucrats to debate a policy and come to an informed consensus; try getting the same result with 10,000 people–or 10 million.

Now, however, new technology may be changing the relationship between democracy and expertise, affording an opportunity to improve competence by making good information available for better governance. Large-scale knowledge-sharing projects, such as the Wikipedia online encyclopedia, and volunteer software-programming initiatives, such as the Apache Webserver (which runs two-thirds of the websites in the world), demonstrate the inadequacy of our assumptions about expertise in the twenty-first century. Ordinary people, regardless of institutional affiliation or professional status, possess information–serious, expert, fact-based, scientific information–to enhance decision-making, information not otherwise available to isolated bureaucrats. Partly as a result of the simple tools now available for collaboration and partly as a result of a highly mobile labor market of "knowledge workers," people are ready and willing to share that information

convinced to join. It is, perhaps, in part because of the work that must go into maintaining a peer-review system that review generally happens only in limited contexts, and too late in the process to have the maximum impact on regulatory decision-making.

Nonprofessional Expertise

In contrast to what we see in government, in many other fields there is a move away from the preeminence of institutionalized professionals. Instead, technology aggregates and refines the knowledge of distributed, non-institutional experts. Patients, not doctors, are providing medical information to each other about cancer via the Association of Online Cancer Resources website and its 159 associated electronic mailing lists. Almost 30,000 citizen-journalists report on stories for OhMyNews.com. Amazon's Mechanical Turk project outsources the work of answering simple questions or doing basic tasks to a distributed network. YouTube depends on amateurs to post video content. The Internet Movie Database (IMDb), which offers information about close to one million movie titles and more than two million entertainment professionals, started as a collection of movie trivia submitted by members of two online newsgroups. In South Korea, the Naver search engine, where Korean speakers answer each other's queries, far outpaces Yahoo and Google as the most popular.

But how might this open, online collaboration improve governmental decision-making? How do we square the expertise and talent we see emerging via Wikipedia or YouTube with the professional standards of science to which we expect governmental decisions to conform? After all, Wikipedia has been known to contain errors and defamation. For every brilliant art film or newsworthy clip, there are thousands of pieces of video junk on YouTube. To put it bluntly, information quality may not be a matter of national security when it comes to a fifth-grade book report, but it is essential to nuclear regulations or environmental safety standards or the quality of issued patents. While we know that excessive reliance on professionals is problematic, we do not want to replace one set of abuses with another by eliminating the professionals and replacing them with direct, popular decision-makers.

Rather, we want to design practices for "collaborative governance," shared processes of responsibility in information-gathering and decision-making that combine the technical expertise of public experts with the legal standards of professional decision-makers. There are plenty of people with expertise to share if their knowledge can successfully be connected to those decision-makers who need it. It is not necessary to pre-select authenticated and known professionals when structures can be put in place to ensure that informational inputs are discernable, specific, well-labeled, and easy to search, sort, and use. An online system will not be without its own problems and abuses, but the assumption is that greater public participation, not in setting values but in supplying information or making sense of and connections between informational sources supplied by others, can substantively improve decision-making.

Peer-to-Patent

On June 15, 2007, the USPTO launched an experiment, the "Peer-to-Patent: Community Patent Review," which could become a model for precisely this sort of collaborative governance. The program solicits public participation in the patent examination process via the Web. This system (the design and implementation of which I direct in cooperation with the USPTO) allows the public to research and upload publications–known in patent law as "prior art"–that will inform the patent examiner about the novelty and obviousness of the invention and enable her to decide whether it deserves a patent. This is truly revolutionary: In the 200 years since Thomas Jefferson founded the patent office, there has been no direct communication between the patent examiner and the public.

"For the first time in history," David J. Kappos, vice president and assistant general counsel at IBM, says in the *Washington Post*, patent-office examiners will be able "to open up their cubicles and get access to a whole world of technical experts." With the consent of participating inventors, this USPTO pilot allows the self-selecting public to review 250 software-patent applications from such companies as CA, Hewlett-Packard, General Electric, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Oracle, Red Hat, Yahoo, and several smaller firms. The community not only submits information, but it also annotates and comments on the publications, explaining how the prior art is relevant to the claims of the patent application. The

community rates the submitted prior art and decides whether or not it deserves to be shared with the USPTO. Only the 10 best submitted prior-art references, as judged on the basis of their relevance to the claims of the patent applications by the online review community, will be forwarded to the patent examiner.

The USPTO pilot program is neither a blog nor a wiki. It is not a free-for-all for "software patents SUCK!" comments. Rather, the software is designed to provide a structured environment that solicits specific information targeted to the decision-making process. Eligible applications are posted online for review for up to four months. There is a shared discussion space, but it requires registration and joining the group committed to reviewing that application. The group can deliberate about the application's quality, decide what research needs to be done, discuss where prior art may be found, and even divvy up the work of finding it. At the same time, the group has tools to "filter" comments in the discussion, identifying those that are most important, contain a request for follow-up research, or are low-quality "noise," thus mitigating the influence of the person who simply talks the loudest or the most. Private-sector websites–from the book reviews on Amazon to the movie reviews on IMDb to the news postings on Slashdot, the technology news site–have shown that these community ratings can be aggregated with surprisingly accurate results to sort and filter discussion.

While the discussion is designed to foster belonging and community and offer a space where ideas can be refined collaboratively, none of the discussion is forwarded to the agency, limiting the opportunity for undue influence. Instead, only the work that will be most helpful to the decision-making process, namely the community's research and the prior art, are forwarded. Those who join an application community research the background to the application and share that research, helping to guide the governmental professional in her work. The research may help the examiner identify fruitful avenues for her search, decreasing the work done in that limited 20-hour window or, at the very least, shortening wild goose chases.

To be sure, the patent examiner still conducts a search. She has all the same information available to her as before. But now she also has the results of this "human database." By structuring the request for feedback, the agency avoids inviting participation it cannot use. And the public has an opportunity to participate in a way that is directly relevant to and will shape decision-making.

What's more, through the software administrators can measure the level of expertise of public reviewers and thus better understand how this online participation process shapes that expertise. They can also measure the impact of public participation on examiner decision-making and on the resulting quality of the issued patent. Over time, with the benefit of greater experience and more data, it may become possible to introduce more refined algorithms for assessing the quality of information on the basis of the past performance of citizen-participants. We can also better understand and anticipate the ways in which those with an interest to do so will attempt to "game the system" (an unavoidable part of the process) and improve the practice accordingly.

Driving this pilot program is a combination of public attention to patent reform and the availability of the technology to do open peer review online. Patent reform has become the subject of intense, recent legislative debate in the United States and in Europe. The problem is not so much with the patent office itself as it is with the explosion in the number of applications, which has put enormous strain on an old system, resulting in the issuance of low-quality patents that subsequently become the subject of expensive and wasteful litigation. Given the doubling of the number of patent applications in the last decade, examiners currently have less than 20 hours to review an application about the most cutting-edge nanotechnology, the latest genetic bio-science, or the most controversial financial business method. In that time, they have to search the USPTO's limited databases to determine if there is a prior publication that would reveal that the application lacks the requisite novelty or significance required. Yet publications–which go beyond traditional scientific journal articles and include websites, software code, and products–are not all to be found in this closed database. Examiners must also contend with poorly drafted applications. There is no legal duty incumbent upon inventors to do a thorough search of the prior art and submit it to the agency.

The problem is as obvious as it is intractable: It is hard to find information that is not there. In other words, the patent examiner has to scour the scientific literature to figure out if a particular chemical compound has already been invented by someone else, lest she award the patent to the wrong person who turns it into the next billion-dollar pharmaceutical

blockbuster. And she can't delay her research, as it would risk exacerbating a backlog that will soon approach one million applications.

Rather than going to the experts, the USPTO realized that it is easier to let the experts find it–and that is precisely what the new program does. The process is open to anyone. At the same time, just as Wikipedia's two million entries are actually maintained by a few thousand knowledgeable and dedicated die-hards, this patent public participation program does not need to attract everyone, just everyone enthusiastic enough to do the hard work of sharing in the burdens of decision-making. Of course, for those who work or study in a particular area of innovation, participation should be anything but hard.

It is assumed that competitive self-interest will be one of the drivers causing people to get involved. Far from distorting the process, when someone from IBM or Microsoft (both of which have publicly announced that employees may participate in the program while on the job) has relevant information to contribute, ultimately the public benefits. Graduate students and those with deep knowledge but little status may also be inclined to participate, whether out of moral indignation that a patent is being applied for in an area of research that they know or out of the desire to gain status in, and professional recognition from, their community of interest. Incentives could eventually be created through prizes and rewards, such as a monetary bounty from an inventor for those who find the best prior art, or public recognition (an "Oscar" for public participation) to the reviewer and the team who contribute the most useful information. It is also an opportunity to generate interest in and a market for the invention.

The UK patent office has announced plans to do its own, much-wider pilot for 10,000 to 15,000 patent applications, adapted to its legal regime and cultural practices. This will make it possible to begin to build a global community with expertise and interest and, at the same time, to test different practices, gather real data about how expertise can best be obtained in response to this complex subject matter, and refine the process for patents. It will also provide valuable learning about how such practices could be adapted for other areas of governance.

Evolving Institutions

Our institutions of governance are characterized by a longstanding culture of professionalism in which bureaucrats–not citizens–are the experts. Until recently, we have viewed this arrangement as legitimate because we have not practically been able to argue otherwise. Now we have a chance to do government differently. We have the know-how to create "civic software" that will help us form groups and communities who, working together, can be more effective at informing decision-making than individuals working alone. We know from James Surowiecki's book, *The Wisdom of Crowds*, as well as Simon and Schuster's new MediaPredict project (which encourages readers to guess which manuscripts will become best-sellers), that technology can be used to aggregate predictions. But Peer-to-Patent is teaching us that we can go beyond the tallying of votes. While the general public has good instincts about value-based decisions and could be engaged better to identify "big mistakes" (such as egregiously unfair media ownership rules), there are specific people out there who possess specific information about patents or trucks or chemicals whom we can now incorporate into our decision-making.

Nor does it have to stop at patents. Scientists who currently give their time to review grant applications might be just as willing to contribute their knowledge to decision-making about the environment, transportation, nuclear power, and agriculture. Frequent travelers have useful information to share with homeland security officials about how to best organize security at airports. Economists, businesspeople, and lawyers know a great deal about financial markets, securities, and consumer protection. State Department officials do not possess better information than select graduate students in computer science about RFID chips for passports. Immigrants and welfare recipients have information based on lived as well as learned experience to contribute.

In order to make it possible for ordinary, busy people to participate, and for government to make use of their knowledge, government must design the practices of public participation to enable groups, not just individuals, to participate. Agencies must crystallize the questions they ask of the public and embed those targeted practices into software. Of course, not even

the best-designed civic software is going to stop government from making bad decisions or ignoring–willfully or otherwise–good information dropped in its lap. And there will be manipulation and gaming, to be sure. But these are not reasons to shy away from opening up the practices of governance, especially when those practices can evolve over time to respond to problems that may arise.

Opening up closed decision-making also introduces a greater degree of transparency and accountability than we have had before. For example, even if Peer-to-Patent does not yield good research or prior art every time, many eyeballs on the application still encourage the inventor to do a better job of writing it and produce public debate and discussion about the application. It drives more information into the open and encourages the "liberation" of government data, not for its own sake, but as an enabler for engagement. And public involvement reminds the agency official that he is working for (and being watched by) the public.

To bring about the new revolution in governance, the next president ought to issue an executive order requiring that every government agency begin to pilot new strategies for improved decision-making. For example, he or she could require that each agency, as part of their Semi-Annual Regulatory Agenda delivered to Congress and as part of a new collaborative governance report to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), set forth at least one "Peer-to-Policy" experiment to see how it could make its decision-making practices more collaborative.

Experimentation with community feedback would provide the impetus for independent rulemaking agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, to post questions to the scientific community before enacting regulations. It would encourage the Department of Labor to create an online network to solicit the expertise of those with disabilities. These new opportunities for participation are not limited to rulemaking activity. The FCC can seek targeted but open advice on the economics of spectrum policymaking as part of its efforts to decide which rules to draft. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration might create an online marketplace for the collaborative creation of weather maps. The National Institute for Standards and Technology could award venture funding for scientific innovation and research, which would benefit from public collaboration and input. With public collaboration, decisions about everything from health care initiatives to housing programs to efforts to attract foreign direct investment could be improved by collaboration with public experts.

And imagine if this executive order were backed by an industry "X-Prize," a large monetary reward for the private or public sector entity that designs the best new civic software tools to support more open decision-making. This X-Prize–or Peer-to-X-Prize–would provide a matching grant to support agency pilot programs and allow OMB to give this software to agencies. It might also go to support the development of tools to be disbursed on a state and local level. The aim would be to create turn-key technologies that can be deployed by any government decision-maker to enlist the help of her "public staff" and give her the tools she needs to send out a short questionnaire, enable collaborative drafting on a document, invite proposals and suggestions, or perform any number of useful activities to engage the interested and expert community. By enabling agencies to try different practices–while bringing down the costs of procuring technology–we can learn a great deal about how to construct new and better practices of public participation.

By being explicitly experimental with new forms of digital institution-building, we have an opportunity to increase the legitimacy of governmental decisions. The tools–increasingly cheap, sometimes free–will not replace the professionals. Technology will not, by itself, make complex regulatory problems any more tractable, or eliminate partisan disputes about values. What this next generation of civic software can do, however, is introduce better information by enabling the expert public to contribute targeted information. In doing so, it can make possible practices of governance that are, at once, more expert and more democratic.

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Welcome to Arizona Voices!

In Arizona, just like in the rest of the nation, our government is of the people, by the people, for the people. AZ Voices is a place where — for the first time — you can have a direct say online in the laws in our state. You and your friends, family and neighbors are invited to weigh in on the bills proposed in the state legislature. Show your support for the bills you favor, and vote down the ones you don't. Leave comments explaining your thoughts. In the Idea Lab, you can even submit your own ideas for bills. Your lawmakers are listening, making sure the bills that most Arizona voters favor have the best chance of becoming law, and you can watch as they move through the legislative process. This is your opportunity to have your voice heard! You can learn more about the goals of AZ Voices at the **About page**.

How do I get started?

First, you need to create an account. But it's a quick and easy process! Just click the **"Sign Up" "Sign Up"** button in the top right corner of any page on AZ Voices. Then, you can either create an account using your existing login information for Facebook, LinkedIn or Google+, or you can create a new login using your email. You will also be asked to verify your voting status when you sign up, so that we can ensure that only registered Arizona voters are weighing in on the bills that impact them.

How do I customize my profile?

To access your profile once you've signed in, simply click

on your name in the upper right hand corner of any page of AZ Voices. Click the "Account" tab. Notice that all the required fields are already filled in. Scroll down to the "Optional Fields." That's where your profile can shine. Tell other Arizona voters a little about yourself and upload a profile picture. That picture will be displayed along with any new policy idea or comment you submit on AZ Voices, and is a good way to take ownership of your input.

What is Arizona Bills?

The first main section of AZ Voices is **Arizona Bills**. Bills are the statutes that have been proposed by lawmakers and are making their way through the state legislature. They are proposed in either the House or the Senate, then go through a process of debates and votes, before possibly being signed into law by the governor. At the Arizona Bills page, you can have a say in that process. Here, you will be able to show your level of support for a bill, and leave comments explaining your opinion. Other Arizona voters will be doing the same. To get to the Arizona Bills page, you can click "Bills" in the top left corner of any AZ Voices page, or you can view all the most recent bills up for discussion on the **AZ Voices homepage**.

How do I know the status of a bill in the legislature?

At AZ Voices, you can watch the entire process play out! A timeline just below the name of the bill on the homepage or the **Bills page** will show the progress that bill has made on the way to becoming law. To view the status and details of any individual bill, click the name of the bill. The timeline underneath the title on the Bill Details page starts with whichever chamber of the Arizona legislature proposed the bill (either the House or the Senate). If that bill passes the originating chamber, it moves to the other. If the other chamber also passes the

bill, it moves to "Governor" on the timeline; if the governor puts a pen to the bill, it moves to "Law," denoting that it has been enacted and has become Arizona law.

How can I weigh in on the bill?

There are a couple of different ways for you to give your input on a bill. On the Bill Details page, you can either rate the bill, showing your level of support for the proposal, or you can join the discussion with other Arizona voters.

What happens when I rate a bill?

Each Bill Details page asks: "Do you support this bill?" Below that question is a scale in which you can show varying levels of support for each bill (Strongly Oppose, Oppose, Slightly Oppose, Slightly Support, Support, Strongly Support). Select the circle that corresponds to your level of support to rate the bill.

Where can I comment on a bill?

On the Bill Details page, you can discuss each bill with other voters. To add your comment, scroll down to the Discussion and start typing in the field that says, "Add your thoughts."

Who is represented in the Stakeholder Reactions?

The videos you see in favor of and opposed to each bill are submitted by "Institutional Users" who were invited to share their response to the bill and tell their side of the debate. These users can be anyone from a school official to a business owner, or anyone else who might have a stake in the bill.

How can I find out what other voters think of the bill?

To see the level of support of other Arizona voters for an individual bill, you can look at the ratings scale on the Bill Details page. Each level of support (Strongly Oppose, Slightly Oppose, etc.) has a corresponding bar graph with a number at the top that shows the number of other AZ Voices participants who have shown that level of support. As more people rate a bill, those numbers and graphs will change to reflect their ratings. You can also read comments from other AZ Voices participants in the Discussion section on the Bill Details page.

How can I find out what lawmakers think of the bill?

Members of the House and Senate will be logging onto AZ Voices regularly to join the conversation and provide their feedback and updates on the progress of each bill. You will find their comments in the discussion section on the Bill Details page.

What is the Idea Lab?

The other main section of AZ Voices is the **Idea Lab**. This is where you can propose your own solutions to the problems you think a new law could address. As with Arizona Bills, you can rate and discuss other Arizona voters' proposed policies as well. To get to the Idea Lab, click **"Ideas"** in the top left corner of any page on AZ Voices, or scroll down to the Ideas section of the **homepage** to see some of the most recent ideas submitted by Arizona voters.

How can I provide my Policy Idea?

There are a few ways for you to provide your solution. You can either click "Add Your Idea" in the Idea Lab section of the **AZ Voices homepage**, or the "Add Idea" button at the top of the **"Idea Lab"** page. Then, give your policy idea a title, explain the problem and your solution to that

problem, decide which subject area your solution falls under, and click "Add It." Once you do that, your idea will be up for discussion by other Arizona voters, and it will be seen by lawmakers!

What subjects can my policy idea address?

We encourage you to address at least one of the 13 different subject areas mentioned on the Idea Submission page. They are: Appropriations; Education; Finance, Health and Human Services; Natural Resources and Rural Affairs; Rules; Transportation; Commerce, Energy and Military; Elections; Government and Environment; Judiciary; Public Safety; and Senate Ethics. While this is not a requirement, sticking with these issues will help ensure that the most important topics to Arizona are addressed.

What does it mean to have a "co-creator" on my policy idea?

When you have a co-creator, it means that another Arizona voter has left a comment on your policy idea that you strongly agree with. This shows other participants that your idea already has the support of at least one other person. Your co-creator is listed on the Idea Details page and is indicated in the discussion.

How can I add a co-creator?

To add a co-creator to your policy idea, just click the "Add Co-Creator" button next to the name of the voter whose idea you supported. That person will automatically become a co-creator.

How can I see other participants' policy ideas?

The AZ Voices homepage and the "Idea Lab" page

both show the policy ideas submitted on AZ Voices. From those pages you can click the title of the idea to read more and to rate the idea at the Idea Details page.

How do I rate another voter's policy idea?

Each idea in the Idea Lab can be given a rating — Neutral (/), It's Okay (one star), I Like It (two stars), I Love It! (three stars). From the "Idea Lab" page, click the idea title. Once on the Idea Details page, you will be given the opportunity to rate each policy idea by clicking on the number of stars on the sliding scale beneath an idea.

What happens when I rate a policy idea?

When you click the number of stars you would like to give a policy idea, the average rating of the idea will change to reflect your rating. The total number of ratings given will also change. These numbers will help lawmakers narrow down the ideas Arizona voters are most in favor of.

How do I comment on another voter's policy idea?

You can comment on any idea on the Idea Lab page by clicking the idea title. Once on the Idea Details page, you'll see a field beneath the idea that says "Add your thoughts." Simply click in that field and start typing your comment, then click "Add Comment."

What does it mean to comment on another voter's policy idea?

By leaving a comment on another voter's policy idea, you are essentially joining that conversation. You can refine an idea, you can dispute it, you can ask the participant who submitted that idea a question. You can even ask other commenting participants their thoughts. Your

comments enrich the dialogue and bring the ideas you're commenting on to the attention of Arizona lawmakers in a different way.

Will lawmakers see my policy idea?

Every policy idea submitted at AZ Voices will be seen and considered by lawmakers. The more shows of support you get from other participants, the more likely it is that lawmakers will give your policy idea some serious thought.

What happens to my policy idea?

As your idea is discussed, the lawmakers who are part of this conversation will update you in the comments on its status in the legislature. Keep checking back to see its progress!

Is there a deadline to submit a policy idea?

There is no deadline to submit your policy ideas on AZ Voices. The conversation is open to you and other Arizona voters 24/7 to share your solutions and make our state better.

What will I be notified of and how often will I be notified?

Every week you will receive an email that updates you on the activity on AZ Voices. You can turn off these weekly emails in the "Preferences" tab of your Profile. You will also receive an email when AZ Voices site administrators have an important message for you. You can turn off these notifications in the "Preferences" tab as well. You will still be notified of these important messages when you visit the site — just look at the bullhorn in the upper right corner of any page.

How can I share AZ Voices with my friends on other social networks?

You have several options. Share buttons are located on nearly every page of AZ Voices. Click the icon for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+ or email to post that page to your friends and followers. Sharing is important to growing this online conversation and making sure everyone has a voice.

Digital Diversity: Broadband and Indigenous Populations in Alaska

Heather E. Hudson
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"We went from house to house taking care of the sick....We had no phones... but used the school's [HF] radio to report [on] our patients. There was no nonsense about confidentiality." -- Paula Ayunerak, Alaska native health aide in the 1960's

Abstract

Alaska Natives comprise several cultural and linguistic groups including Inupiat, Yupik, Athabascan, Aleut, Tlingit and Haida, organized into some 226 tribes. Approximately two-thirds of the indigenous population live in more than 200 rural villages, most of which are remote settlements with fewer than 200 people and no road access.

Since the late 1970's, all communities with at least 25 permanent residents have had telephone service, but broadband connectivity remains limited. The major mechanism for extending Internet access to rural Alaska has been federal universal service funds, specifically the E-rate program that subsidizes Internet access for schools and libraries, and the Rural Health program that subsidizes connectivity for rural health clinics and hospitals. Under the federal Stimulus program, Alaska has also recently received funding for infrastructure to extend broadband in southwest Alaska, for improved connectivity for rural libraries, and for training and support for rural public computer centers.

These initiatives primarily support improvements in Internet and broadband availability for rural Alaska. However, this paper proposes a more rigorous framework including not only *availability,* but more broadly *access*, and also *adoption,* and examines how these concepts apply to Alaska natives. The paper also examines other elements of digital diversity, including *innovation* in applications and content, ICT *entrepreneurship*, and participation in telecommunications *policy-making*.

1. The Alaska Context: Indigenous Populations and Isolated Communities

Alaska is the largest state in the U.S. (571,951 square miles or more than twice the size of Texas), but with the nation's lowest population density, of only 1.2 persons per square mile. Total population now exceeds 710,000, of which 14.8 percent are Alaska natives (nationwide, indigenous Americans are only one percent of the total U.S. population).[1] Alaska natives include several cultural and linguistic groups including Inupiat, Yupik, Athabascan, Aleut, Tlingit and Haida, comprising some 226 tribes. Approximately two-thirds of the indigenous population lives in more than 200 rural villages, most of which are remote settlements with fewer than 200 people and no road access.

All Alaska communities with at least 25 permanent residents have telephone service as a result of a state regulatory mandate in the 1970s. The State also provided $5 million to procure satellite earth stations for communities that had no phone service.[2] In the 1980s, the State supported a program called LearnAlaska that transmitted a channel of educational film and video programs to supplement instructional materials in village schools without science labs or specialized teachers. Radio stations were established in several native communities; they became part of a statewide public network that now includes 25 stations, sharing the costs and benefits of a coordinated statewide news, public affairs and satellite distribution system. These initiatives resulted in what might be called the era of analog diversity or analog inclusion.

In the 1990s, dial-up email and then Internet access to be offered in rural Alaska. With the introduction of the E-rate subsidy program resulting from the 1996 Telecommunications Act (see below), rural schools and libraries were able to lease bandwidth so that school students and other community residents could use their facilities to go online. This was the first major step toward digital inclusion for rural Alaska native communities.

2. Digital Diversity: Parameters for Alaska

Access and Adoption

Availability of telecommunications from the providers' perspective can be defined in terms of houses passed (for wireline technologies such as optical fiber, coaxial cable, and copper) and coverage for wireless technologies. Availability from a users' perspective requires a different lens. FCC data are reported by household: percentage of households with telephones, with broadband subscriptions, etc. However, availability at local sites such as libraries, community centers, and schools is also an important indicator for Alaska, especially for broadband. And as mobile phones and increasingly smartphones and portable devices proliferate, individual or personal access should also be considered.

However, access involves more than availability. Therefore, an analytical framework for rural Alaska should include *availability, access*, and *adoption.* Factors that could influence native adoption at the household or personal level include price, availability of computer or other device, availability of electricity, skills, and perceived relevance of content or services. Adoption through shared usage at community locations could be influenced by skill levels, availability of training and/or mentoring, schedule of availability, perceived relevance and value.

Several recent studies have examined broadband adoption and reasons cited for nonadoption among U.S. residents, with some data disaggregated by various demographic and ethnic criteria (age, education level, urban/rural, gender, ethnicity, etc.) The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) carried out a study in 2009 to examine broadband adoption and use; the top reason given by non-users for not using the Internet was affordability. [3] The 2010 report *Exploring the Digital Nation* by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), states that "persons with low incomes, seniors, minorities, the less-educated, non-family households, and the nonemployed tend to lag behind other groups in home broadband use." It provides detailed analysis of broadband adoption gaps: for 26 percent of non-broadband users, the main reason for non-adoption was that home broadband Internet was too

expensive. Among those who did not use the Internet at all, price and perceived relevance were cited as key considerations. [4],[5] While helpful in increasing our understanding of barriers to adoption among various groups including minorities, these studies do not have samples of Alaska natives large enough to provide any valid findings.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Yet digital diversity may involve more than use of available content or facilities – it may include various forms of *innovation,* for example:

- In adapting content and applications to local conditions;
- In developing new content and applications (involving local languages, cultures, development priorities, etc.);
- Entrepreneurship: in starting new commercial or public service activities taking advantage of broadband.

Services Provided for Native Communities

Another element of Alaska digital diversity involves Alaska natives as beneficiaries of telecommunications-delivered or –supported services, particularly health care and education. Health care in remote communities is provided by native health aides who rely on telecommunications for consultation with doctors are regional hospitals and for transmission of patient data. The telemedicine facilities are also used for training and continuing education.

All Alaska communities with at least 10 students must have schools offering K-12 instruction. Teachers in small schools teach several grades, and teacher turnover is high. Internet access plus other audiovisual instructional materials are important supplements to classroom instruction; advanced placement and other courses such as languages are available only online. Post secondary courses for college credit, training for jobs available in rural Alaska, and continuing education are also offered online. Thus, these services should be considered as components of digital diversity, as they are a means of providing services for remote indigenous communities that would not otherwise be available, and education and training to enhance skills of native residents.

Participation in the Communications Sector: Policy and Services

An analysis of digital diversity in Alaska should also include the role of Alaska natives in developing policies for communications services for native populations, and in owning and/or operating communications carriers and other service providers.

3. Extending Access: Broadband Stimulus Projects for Alaska

In 2009, the U.S. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act or ARRA) appropriated $7.2 billion "to begin the process of significantly expanding the reach and quality of broadband services." [6] The Recovery Act allocated $2.5 billion for rural infrastructure projects to the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), which administers these funds through the Broadband Infrastructure Program (BIP). Alaska received more than $117 million for BIP rural

infrastructure projects. The largest project, TERRA (Terrestrial for Every Region of Rural Alaska), will provide terrestrial connectivity through an optical fiber hybrid optical fiber and microwave network to 65 native Yupik villages in Bristol Bay and the Yukon-Kuskokwim regions, an area the approximate size of North Dakota.

Another project, SABRE (Southwest Alaska Broadband Rural Expansion), is intended to provide wireless 4th generation (4G) broadband service to southwest Alaska through a partnership between a telecommunications company and a subsidiary of Sea Lion Corporation, the Alaska Native Village Corporation for Hooper Bay. A third funded project offers free satellite equipment and installation plus discounted service to residents who do not have other options to access broadband.[7]

The Broadband Telecommunications Opportunities Program (BTOP), established by NTIA to administer its $4.7 billion allocated under the Recovery Act, has funded two Alaska projects (in addition to state broadband mapping). OWL (Online with Libraries) will upgrade connectivity for 65 rural libraries, almost all of which are in indigenous communities. Facilities will include videoconferencing and webconferencing, so that the libraries can serve as public computing centers. It will also provide training and support in digital literacy to benefit community residents without broadband at home such as school students and adults taking online university and continuing education courses. Beneficiaries are intended to be remote library users where computer home ownership and Internet subscriptions are lowest, K-12 students to obtain homework help, adults undertaking university and vocational courses, and public service agencies serving the rural communities.[8]

Another project, Bridging the e-Skills Gap in Alaska, will provide computer skills and broadband awareness training to promote broadband adoption, particularly targeting Alaska native villages. The project brings together 21 partner organizations throughout rural Alaska to increase technology literacy. It intends to generate up to 88,000 new broadband users and providing training to over 84,000 Alaskans, and to create 88 new jobs in isolated, primarily indigenous, communities. It also plans to create a statewide Multi-Sector Digital Inclusion Council "as a forum for the discussion and sharing of best practices and the elimination of redundancy through sharing of partner-developed content."[9]

Additional broadband funding for rural Alaska has been provided by the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) through the state regulator, the Regulatory Commission of Alaska. RCA's Rural Alaska Broadband Internet Access Grant Program is intended to facilitate long-term affordable broadband Internet services in rural Alaska communities where these services do not currently exist. Eligible communities must have a population of less than 20,000, a "not-employed rate" of more than 19.5 percent. Broadband speed is defined as 768 kbps (the old FCC definition) and the access refers to individual households. Funding is available to telecommunications carriers, which can receive up to 75 percent of construction costs, and must commit to keeping rates comparable to those in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau for at least 2 years.[10]

All of these projects are intended to increase broadband access and adoption in rural Alaska, and particularly among Alaska natives. It will be important to evaluate their impact, in terms of

number and demographics of new users, types of usage, and resulting benefits for individuals and their communities.

4. Universal Service Policies: Increasing Access for Indigenous Populations

Sustainability for providers and affordability for users are typically addressed through universal service policies. In Alaska, they may be considered two sides of the same coin. Without federal subsidies, Alaska's vastness and low population density would make telecommunications prohibitively costly for rural communities and unattractive for private sector investment, thus severely limiting the potential for digital diversity.

Alaska has been a major beneficiary of the FCC's universal service programs, both in absolute funding and in funding per capita:

- *Voice Services:* From the High Cost Fund, Alaska telecommunications carriers serving rural areas received $168m in 2009;
- *Internet for Schools and Libraries (E-Rate)*: Alaska received $25.5m in 2009; $155m from 1998 through 2009, the highest per capita of any state;
- *Rural Telemedicine:* Alaska receives the largest amount of any state: $29m in 2009;
- *Low Income Subscribers:* Lifeline and Linkup: Alaska low income subscribers received subsidies totaling $24.5m in 2009.[11]

The FCC has begun the process of reviewing universal service support programs as a key strategy to implementing the National Broadband Plan, and intends to replace some existing support funds with a Connect America Fund.[12] [13] The first steps are underway through a series of FCC Notices of Inquiry (NOIs) and Notices of Proposed Rule-Making (NPRMs)[14] on universal service topics including:

- High cost operator support mechanisms
- Low income customer support mechanisms (Lifeline and Link-Up programs)
- Subsidies for schools and libraries (the E-Rate program)
- Rural Health Care connectivity.

All of these are critical to provision of affordable communications, including broadband, to indigenous residents of rural Alaska.

The E-rate support for schools and libraries was retained in the FCC's Sixth Report and Order on Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism in September 2010.[15] The High Cost Fund component of universal service is currently under review.[16] The $168m in high cost subsidies for Alaska carriers in 2009 has helped to keep prices for telecommunications services for rural indigenous residents "reasonably comparable" to urban rates, as mandated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Alaska telecommunications carriers, ranging from statewide operators to small cooperatives and "mom and pop" companies, are strong proponents of retaining most elements of the existing High Cost Fund, which they perceive as threatened by the transition to the Connect America Fund. They argue that their customers, many of whom are native residents of small, isolated communities, would be severely disadvantaged if subsidies for rural services disappeared.

However, the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service states that it "supports deployment and maintenance of broadband services in areas that are now unserved or underserved, although it remains important to continue support for existing voice networks." It also recommends consideration of the extension of universal service support to broadband as part of the broader universal service reform.[17]

The E-Rate: Support for Community Access in Rural Alaska

The E-rate (short for "education rate") created by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 provides discounts on a wide variety of telecommunications, Internet access and internal connections for schools and libraries. The applicable discount rate is based on a school's economic need and whether it is located in an urban or rural area. Rural Alaska qualifies for a 90 percent discount; i.e. only 10 percent of connectivity costs must be provided from local or state sources.[18] Approved schools and libraries post their requirements online, where they are open for competitive bids.

In Alaska, the E-Rate subsidy had brought Internet access to most indigenous village schools. The schools also have become "anchor tenants," major long-term customers that can help to justify infrastructure investments that can be used to serve other village customers. Despite the small size and isolation of many of the schools and libraries, carriers have competed in many rural areas of the state for the E-rate support. One of the competitive providers determined that the school subsidy was critical to its business case to bring broadband to the villages (primarily by satellite), and subsequently installed broadband wireless to cover the villages, with price for individual access not to exceed the price in Anchorage, the largest city.[19]

All Alaska communities with at least 10 students must have schools offering K-12 instruction. Teachers typically cover several grades, and lab facilities are very limited. Students use the Internet for coursework; they may also take advanced placement classes and foreign languages online. Community residents use connected library computers to search for jobs and to participate in training programs and continuing education classes.

Rural Telemedicine

Alaska's rural health care delivery problems are similar to those faced in many developing countries. Alaska ranks 48th among the states in "doctors to residents" ratio, and 65 percent of Alaska physicians are located in Anchorage. There is also an ongoing shortage of medical specialists. Some 59 percent of Alaskans live in "medically underserved areas," and many of these are indigenous residents.[20] Physicians serving rural indigenous communities are located at regional hospitals. Health care in native villages is provided by health aides, community residents with high school or less formal education and six weeks of training in primary medical care.

Telecommunications has been an integral component of health care delivery for Alaska natives since the days of HF radio. In the 1970's, NASA's ATS-1 experimental satellite showed that reliable voice communications between village health aides and regional doctors (as opposed to the often unreliable links via HF) could improve diagnosis and treatment of Alaska natives in

isolated villages, and could also be used for continuing education.[21] Today, AFHCAN (the Alaska Federal Health Care Access Network) connects about 250 sites including links between more than 150 village clinics and regional hospitals. AFHCAN handles about 22,000 cases per year, and has documented significant benefits in terms of reduced wait times for consultations, patient travel savings, and high provider and patient satisfaction. [22]

The viability of AFHCAN is highly dependent on the FCC's Rural Health Care fund, which subsidizes the difference between the price of connectivity in urban vs. rural areas. In Alaska, because of the isolation and dependence on satellite circuits, the subsidy can amount to 90 percent of charges from telecommunications providers.[23] As part of its universal service policies reform, it appears that the FCC intends to retain this subsidy program.[24]

5. Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Some Alaska entrepreneurial activities that benefit the indigenous economy such as ecotourism and the Iditarod[25] dogsled race from Anchorage to Nome use websites to attract visitors. Others that offer native handicrafts have used a web presence to extend their reach beyond tourists who visit their shops in Anchorage or Juneau. For example, Oomingmak Musk Ox Producers' Co-operative whose members knit clothing from muskox wool (much warmer than sheep's wool) states that they have generated significant sales from their website.[26]

Native Alaskans are also using the Internet to preserve their culture and history. A native language map first produced at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in the 1970s has now been updated to included traditional and modern place names, with links to a GIS database. The map data will be available online so that others may add demographic, scientific, or historical information about locations on the map. A group of native leaders and volunteers is using the web to preserve and share materials about the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) during the 40th anniversary year of its signing in 2001.[27] The Alaska Native Cultural Center also provides historical and cultural materials on its website.[28] The Inuit Circumpolar Conference includes Inuit in Alaska, the Canadian Arctic, and Siberia, and uses a variety of media to share cultural materials and to organize its membership to address shared issues such as climate change, ocean resources, and natural resource exploitation.[29]

Alaska natives in the far North have also been entrepreneurial in providing telecommunications services. OTZ, the first native telephone cooperative in the U.S., provides fixed and wireless voice and data services to the Inupiat regional hub of Kotzebue and ten Inupiat villages plus the native-owned Red Dog mine in northwest Alaska on the Bering Sea. The Arctic Slope Telephone Cooperative serves Barrow and seven Inupiat villages on the North Slope and in the Brooks Range plus the oil pipeline service center of Deadhorse/Prudhoe Bay. Both received funding to install and upgrade their networks from the Rural Utilities Service. An RUS-funded stimulus project to provide wireless 4G services in southwest Alaska involves a partnership between a telecommunications company and a subsidiary of Sea Lion Corporation, the Alaska Native Village Corporation for Hooper Bay.

6. Involvement in Communications Policy-Making

The Federal Communications Commission recently established a Native Nations Broadband Task Force, as part of its implementation process for the National Broadband Plan. Of the nineteen appointed members, two are Alaska natives, from Kawerak, the native association serving Bering Straits Inupiat communities based in Nome, and from the Tanana Chiefs Conference based in Fairbanks.[30] The FCC has also issued two notices in 2011 on broadband matters specifically related to native populations and native lands.[31] These notices provide an opportunity for native Alaskans to comment on requirements for broadband and demographic and geographical conditions that need to be addressed in implementing the Connect America Fund and other FCC initiatives or rule-makings. However, to take advantage of these opportunities, native representatives will likely require training and mentoring about both the specific issues and procedures to participate in FCC proceedings.

Funding from NTIA for broadband planning and mapping should also include both participation and employment opportunities. A recently-established state broadband task force with members appointed by the governor includes one Alaska native, but more should be added. The FCC native task force members could be asked to join to provide a bridge between federal and state activities, as well as more knowledge of native concerns and communications issues. Alaska native organizations with expertise in field research and community relations should be involved in the data collection and outreach required for the NTIA projects.

7. Steps to Enhance Digital Diversity in Rural Alaska

The framework proposed in this paper to analyze digital diversity among indigenous populations in rural Alaska includes several parameters:

- Access: availability and affordability
- Adoption
- Innovation: in applications and content; in providing ICT services
- Beneficiaries: of ICT-delivered or –facilitated services
- Policies that affect access and adoption: e.g. universal service support, broadband planning
- Participation in policy making.

From Access to Adoption

Several initiatives are underway to extend availability of broadband to Alaska native villages. Next steps should include verifying broadband map data for rural Alaska and identifying communities that still do not have broadband available. The current draft map appears to have inaccuracies for several rural regions. Also, data reported from a telephone survey conducted by Connected Nation appear to overrepresent computer ownership and broadband usage in rural Alaska.[32] A follow-up survey with a larger sample and pretested questions specifically designed for rural Alaska is required.

Concerning adoption, national data for the US show lower levels of broadband adoption among lower income, rural, and some minority populations. Among non-adopters, lack of

relevance is cited as main reason for not having broadband at home.[33] However, as noted above, the Alaska samples are not large enough to identify barriers for rural Alaskans or Alaska Natives. Research is needed in Alaska to increase understanding of reasons for nonadoption, to develop strategies to encourage adoption, and to identify or develop relevant applications for users with limited ICT or language skills.

Evaluation

Government investments in infrastructure and support for broadband services are based on the premise that use of broadband can contribute to goals such as social, cultural, and economic development, improved or extended delivery of public services, and support for various sectors and other priorities. Broadband initiatives should therefore be evaluated not only to determine whether the funds resulted in the intended broadband deployment, but to assess impacts of increased access on availability and effectiveness of health services, education and training, government programs and services, and new or increased economic activities.

More than $140 million in Stimulus funds has been awarded to projects intended to extend broadband and increase Internet and broadband usage in Alaska, primarily in rural indigenous communities. Stimulus projects are typically intended to create jobs quickly – and to support projects that are "shovel ready." Yet these may be no more than short term construction and installation jobs. Long term employment and economic impact requires more time, an understanding of the economic needs and goals of the region, and training to impart necessary ICT skills.

The infrastructure projects, which are in Yupik regions of southwest Alaska, are intended to increase broadband availability. However, as noted above, adoption by native Alaskans may depend on additional factors such as price, computer ownership and skills, and perceived relevance of content. Given the lack of data on barriers to adoption in rural Alaska, a pre-installation study should be carried out to determine the extent of current Internet use, and perceived demand as well as concerns that might impact adoption. A strategy could then be developed to integrate the infrastructure investments from RUS with the skills training and applications development projects supported by NTIA.

Further, evaluation of these projects would be useful to determine increase in usage, barriers to usage, and to identify social and economic impacts. These results would be useful for further broadband planning and analysis for rural Alaska.

Innovation and Participation in Policy-Making

Alaska natives have begun to use broadband and online tools for cultural preservation, access to health and education services, and economic development. However, additional training could help them to develop more applications and content, and to obtain the skills needed for IT jobs in their communities.

Also, as outlined above, there are also new opportunities for Alaska natives to participate in broadband and other communications policy and planning activities for Alaska. Proposed universal service reforms could significantly affect the availability and affordability of

communications services including broadband in rural Alaska. Again, training and mentoring will be needed to enable a new generation of native leaders to help shape Alaska's communications future.

NOTES:

[1] 2010 census data for Alaska at http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/cen/ . An additional 51,875 identified themselves as racially composed of two or more races; a significant percentage of these are likely to be partly Alaska native.

[2] Hudson, Heather E. *Communication Satellites: Their Development and Impact*. New York: Free Press, 1990.

[3] Horrigan, John. "Broadband Adoption and Use in America." *The FCC Omnibus Broadband Initiative (OBI) Working Paper Series.* Washington, DC: Federal Communications Commission, 2009.

[4] National Telecommunications and Information Administration. *Digital Nation: 21st Century America's Progress Toward Universal Broadband Internet Access*. Washington, DC, February 2010.

[5] Economics and Statistics Administration and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, *Exploring the Digital Nation: Home Broadband Internet Adoption in the United States.* Washington, DC:, November 2010.

[6] American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, (Pub. Law. 111-5). See www.recovery.gov.

[7] See www.rurdev.usda.gov/UTP_BIPResources.html.

[8] See www2.ntia.doc. gov/Alaska.

[9] See www2.ntia.doc.gov/Alaska.

[10] Regulatory Commission of Alaska. "Rural Alaska Broadband Internet Access Grant Program Round Five Grant Application Guide(2010)." See www.rca.alaska.gov.

[11] Derived from data posted at www.usac.org .

[12] Federal Communications Commission. *Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan.* Washington, DC, March 2010.

[13] Federal Communications Commission. Notice of Inquiry and Proposed Rulemaking: "In the Matter of Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; High-Cost Universal Service Support." Washington, DC, April 21, 2010.

[14] For example, Connect America Fund and High Cost Support: FCC Notice of Inquiry and Proposed Rulemaking: Adopted April 21, 2010; Upgrading E-Rate for the 21st Century: FCC 6th Report and Order: Adopted Sept 23, 2010; Review of Lifeline and Linkup Programs: Federal State Joint Board Recommended Decision: adopted Nov. 3, 2010; FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. In the Matter of Rural Health Care Support Mechanism, WC Docket No. 02-60, adopted July 15, 2010.

[15] Federal Communications Commission. "In the Matter of Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism: A National Broadband Plan For Our Future." Sixth Report and Order. Adopted September 23, 2010.

[16] Federal Communications Commission. In the Matter of Connect America Fund, A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers,

High-Cost Universal Service Support, Developing an Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Lifeline and Link-Up. Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Adopted February 8, 2011.

[17] Federal Communications Commission." In the Matter of Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Lifeline and Link Up: Recommended Decision." Released November 4, 2010.

[18] Hudson, Heather E. "The Future of the E-Rate: U.S. Universal Service Fund Support for Public Access and Social Services" in Schejter, Amit, ed., ... *and Communications for All: An Agenda for a New Administration.* Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009.

[19] Hudson, Heather E. *From Rural Village to Global Village*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

[20] . Ferguson, Stewart, and John Kokesh. " What Works: Outcomes Data from AFHCAN and ANTHC Telehealth: An 8 Year Retrospective." Anchorage: Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, 2011.

[21] Hudson, Heather E. and Edwin B. Parker "Medical Communication in Alaska by Satellite." *New England Journal of Medicine*, December 20, 1973.

[22] See www.afhcan.org and Hudson, Heather E. *From Rural Village to Global Village*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

[23] Personal interviews, Yukon Kuskokwim Health Center, Bethel, Alaska, March 2011.

[24] Federal Communications Commission. In the Matter of Rural Health Care Support Mechanism WC Docket No. 02-60 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Adopted: July 15, 2010

[25] See, for example, www.iditarod.com and Alaska Wilderness and Recreation Tourism Association , www.awrta.org .

[26] Personal communication. Also see www.qiviut.com.

[27] See www.ancsaat40.com.

[28] See www.alaskanative.net.

[29] See www.inuit.org and www.iccalaska.org.

[30] Federal Communications Commission. "Chairman Genachowski names Members to The FCC-Native Nations Broadband Task Force." Press Release, March 3, 2011.

[31] Federal Communications Commission. *Improving Communications Services for Native Nations*, CG Docket No. 11-41, Notice of Inquiry, 26 FCC Rcd 2672 (2011); Federal Communications Commission, In the Matter of Improving Communications Services for Native Nations by Promoting Greater Utilization of Spectrum over Tribal Lands, WT Docket No. 11-40, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, March 3, 2011.

[32] See www.connectak.org.

[33] Federal Communications Commission. Presentation at September Commission Meeting, September 29, 2009. See http://reboot.fcc.gov/open-meetings/2009/september.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

H.B. 329

Collaborative Governance

Request for a Bill Hearing

To: Rep. Bob Lynn, Chair, House State Affairs Committee

From: Rep. Geran Tarr, prime sponsor, H.B. 329

Date: February 24, 2014

As prime sponsor of H.B. 329, I would like to request a hearing on the bill by the House State Affairs Committee. Attached is the most recent version of the bill, the sponsor statement, and supporting documents.

Sincerely,

Geran Tarr

Rep. Geran Tarr

January-May: State Capitol • Juneau, AK 99801-1182 • (907) 465-3424 • Fax (907) 465-3793
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Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov

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The Alaska State Legislature

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Session Schedules

28TH LEGISLATURE

Second Session: January 21, 2014 to April 20, 2014
First Session: January 15, 2013 to April 14, 2013

Session Prefile Dates

First Prefile Release

Second Prefile Release

Daily Schedules

Daily Floor Session Schedules

Daily Committee Meeting schedules

3/17/2014

HOUSE SCHEDULE

8:00 AM House Education
8:30 AM House Finance
1:00 PM House Judiciary
1:00 PM House Resources
1:30 PM House Finance
3:15 PM House Labor & Commerce
5:00 PM House Legislative Council

SENATE SCHEDULE

8:00 AM Senate Education
9:00 AM Senate Finance
1:00 PM Senate Education & Early Development
1:30 PM Senate Judiciary
3:00 PM Senate Fish & Game
3:00 PM Senate Health & Social Services
3:30 PM Senate Resources
4:00 PM Senate Governor
4:15 PM Senate Legislature
~~5:00 PM Senate Labor & Workforce Development~~

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House Finance Committee

House Education Committee

Senate Education Committee

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Senate Labor & Commerce Meets

March 13th, 2014

Senate Labor & Commerce meets with a busy agenda of 7 bills.

Past Updates

Capitol Building Exterior Restoration

3-17-14

Samantha

Geran's aide will email info

Mitch + Ceo Rick) They would host the website

Arizona Voices

Based in Nebraska — Private Company

We have Google alert

+ it Stuff

Collaborated government

600-700 institutions

must be registered to vote on part of it.

Costs - flat fee $10,000 - $20,000 per year.

Many notes:

Basis is a factual website. Heres the bill + where it is in the process.

REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR
House District 17 • Alaska State Legislature

Samantha Weinstein
Office of Representative Geran Tarr

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