

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor Ricketts Seeks Rural Broadband Task Force Members

MAY 7, 2018 (LINCOLN, NEB.) — Governor Ricketts is seeking representatives of agribusiness, business, wireline telecommunications, wireless telecommunications, public power, health care providers, postsecondary educational institutions, and rural schools to serve as members of the Rural Broadband Task Force. The task force will review issues related to availability, adoption, and affordability of broadband services in rural areas of Nebraska and make recommendations to the Legislature.

“While Nebraska has rightly earned a reputation as the Silicon Prairie, we have more work to do to ensure that every part of the state has access to broadband to grow businesses, support smart farming, and to improve access to health care and educational opportunities. I encourage interested Nebraskans to submit an application to serve on the Rural Broadband Task Force.”

The 14-member task force will be chaired by Ed Toner, Chief Information Officer for the State of Nebraska and Chair of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission.

“With broadband available to 89% of Nebraskans, but only 66% of rural Nebraskans, Nebraska is facing a rural-urban digital divide,” said Toner. “I welcome the opportunity to work with key stakeholders on the Rural Broadband Task Force to improve broadband availability in Nebraska.”

Interested applicants should fill out the nomination form on Governor Rickett’s website by June 8th. Nomination forms can be filled out online, at <https://governor.nebraska.gov/board-comm-req>.

The task force was created by LB 994, which was passed 48-0-1 by the Legislature and signed by Governor Ricketts on April 17. The bill was introduced by Senator Curt Friesen, chair of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. The task force will submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by Nov. 1, 2019.

Resources:

<https://governor.nebraska.gov/board-comm-req>

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