

RESOLUTION NO. 2011 – 322

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH URGING THE STATE TO  
RECOGNIZE THE ROLE OF MUNICIPALITIES IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF  
TECHNOLOGY SERVICES FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF  
NORTH CAROLINA AND TO EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT POTENTIAL  
LEGISLATION TO LIMIT LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISION OF  
BROADBAND SERVICE

**Whereas**, access to high capacity, high-speed, state-of-the-art broadband networks is essential for our state to compete in the global economy and to provide citizens access to advanced applications in medicine, public safety, energy management and education;

**Whereas**, the United States is rapidly losing ground to other countries in broadband subscriptions per capita and North Carolina is similarly losing ground to other states;

**Whereas**, contrary to that trend, the City of Raleigh has made significant strides in ensuring that businesses, citizens, and visitors have access to technology services, providing free WiFi service in the center city area;

**Whereas**, in March of 2010 the City of Raleigh was named America's Most Wired City by Forbes, ranking higher overall than any other U.S. city in three measures—broadband penetration, broadband access, and plentiful WiFi hot spots;

**Whereas**, the City of Raleigh's experience demonstrates the economic development benefits of investment in the deployment of advanced networks by public and private providers;

**Whereas**, Senate Bill 87 and House Bill 129, companion bills entitled Level Playing Field/Local Gov't Competition, were introduced in the 2011 Regular Session of the North Carolina General Assembly; and

**Whereas**, if enacted the proposed legislation would not have leveled the playing field but instead would have hindered local governments from providing needed communications services, especially advanced high-speed broadband, in underserved areas and imposed burdensome obligations on local governments that private broadband providers would not have to meet;

**Whereas**, if enacted the proposed legislation would have denied local governments the availability of federal grants under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to assist in providing affordable access to high capacity broadband service in unserved and underserved areas; and

**Whereas**, private providers have not been willing or able to provide high-speed broadband services to all, and local governments have stepped in to serve the public and promote economic development in their respective areas;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE RALEIGH CITY COUNCIL THAT:**

1. The State of North Carolina adopt policies to encourage the development of high-speed broadband, including advanced, next-generation fiber-to-the-premise networks, in order to fully serve the citizens and advance education and economic development throughout the state.
2. The General Assembly provide incentives for both public and private development of high capacity connections in order to handle rapidly growing data needs.
3. The General Assembly promote competition by curtailing predatory pricing practices that are used to push new providers and public broadband services out of the market.
4. The General Assembly reject any legislation similar to the Level Playing Field bills that would have a chilling effect on local economies and would impede or remove local governments' ability to provide broadband services, including WiFi, to enhance economic development and improve the quality of life for their citizens, and would negatively impact cities such as Salisbury and Wilson which have made large capital investments in broadband systems.
5. A copy of this Resolution be given to each member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the House Standing Committee on Public Utilities.

**Adopted:** March 1, 2011

**Effective:** March 1, 2011