



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK COUNCIL MEMBER GALE A. BREWER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***** MEDIA ALERT *****

THE NEED FOR SPEED!

Brewer Brings Broadband Committee to Staten Island

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- WHAT:** Broadband Committee holds Public Meeting on Staten Island's Broadband Connectivity
- WHO:** New York City Council Member Gale A. Brewer, the Broadband Advisory Committee, Staten Island public school students, CUNY College of Staten Island professors and their classes, parents, nonprofit leaders, small business owners and senior centers
- WHEN:** Thursday, March 5, 2008, 11 AM – 3 PM
- WHERE:** CUNY College of Staten Island (Building 1P)
Recital Hall, The Center for the Arts
2800 Victory Boulevard
Staten Island, NY 10314
- BLOG:** <http://nycbroadband.blogspot.com/>

Coming on the heels of successful public hearings in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens where hundreds of people attended, the New York City Broadband Advisory Committee will hear from policy experts, Staten Island residents and business people in a Public Meeting of the Broadband Advisory Committee in Staten Island. During this official hearing on the borough's Broadband status, the City Council seeks to answer the following questions: How important is affordable Broadband to businesses and to under-served communities? How will high-speed Internet connections improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers and their families?

"New York is the most dynamic city in the world. But when it comes to the Internet, we're working to catch up to other jurisdictions," said Council Member Brewer, Chair of the New York City Council's Committee on Technology in Government. Brewer sponsored Local Law 126, which created the NYC Broadband Advisory Committee. "I am excited to work with the Mayor's Office in making New York a place where you don't have to pay to go slow. We need affordable high-speed Internet connections to bring in jobs, help schools, and make the city safer."

According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project in May 2008 Survey, **32% of American households are still not using the Internet at all** and “those with less education, those with lower household incomes, and Americans age 65 and older are less likely to have embraced broadband than those who are younger and have higher socio-economic status.” Seeking to address these same imbalances, Broadband Advisory Committee Chairperson, Shaun Belle, and CEO of Mount Hope Housing Company said, “Understanding the challenges to Broadband connectivity for the average New Yorker is a primary focus of the Broadband Advisory Committee; exploring and potentially implementing solutions to address these challenges will be the basis of our future planning.”

Andrew Rasiej, an Advisory Committee Member and the Founder of the Personal Democracy Forum and MOUSE said, “These hearings are critical to focusing broad political attention and building consensus for the need to guarantee all New Yorkers an opportunity to participate in the 21st Century economy.” As of February 2009, President Obama’s stimulus plan includes \$7 billion in broadband infrastructure development to ensure the American economy is competitive in the long run.

The New York Broadband Advisory Committee was created by Local Law 126, a bill sponsored by Council Member Gale Brewer. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Mayor and the City Council on how to bring affordable high-speed Internet connection to **all New York City residents**, nonprofit organizations and businesses. The public hearing in Staten Island is the final in a series of five being convened in every borough. The Committee will compile their recommendations to the Mayor at the conclusion of this hearing.

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Shaun M. Belle - Broadband Advisory Committee Chair, President and CEO, Mount Hope Housing Company
Mitchel Ahlbaum - General Counsel and Deputy Commissioner for Telecommunications Services, DoITT
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Avi Duvdevani - Chief Information Officer/Deputy General Manager, NYCHA
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Howard Szarfarc - President, Time Warner Cable of New York and New Jersey
Anthony Townsend - Research Director, Institute for the Future

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Neil Pariser - Senior Vice President, South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp.
Andrew Rasiej - Founder of MOUSE, Former candidate for Public Advocate of New York City
Jose Rodriguez - President and Founder, Hispanic Information and Telecommunications Network
David Wicks - Founding Partner, Alwyn Group, Former Cablevision executive, Wall Street investment banker
Elisabeth Stock - President and Co-Founder, Computers for Youth
Nicholas Thompson - Senior Editor, WIRED Magazine

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For more information or to testify please contact Kunal Malhotra with the Office of Council Member Gale A. Brewer at 212-788-6975 or Kunal.Malhotra@council.nyc.gov