

## **Western Mass Gets Broadband**

**July 8, 2010**

**wggb.com**

**By Jim Cline**

GREENFIELD, Mass. (WGGB) -- The federal government is investing in Western Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute is receive \$45.5 million to bring broadband Internet to 123 towns in Western Massachusetts. It's a project that is projected to take 30 months.

MBI will string fiber optics to anchor institutions in these towns and other companies will be linking residents and businesses to the technology.

"This investment's going to lay the groundwork for sustainable economic growth in the medium and long term by connecting areas of Massachusetts that for too long have been without the economic educational and social benefits of high-speed Internet service," said U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke.

Locke went on to say that dial-up Internet just doesn't cut it in this day and age.

It's something that many rural residents will agree with.

"I've seen the letters from the faculty members at UMass who live just a couple of miles away from the campus," he said, "who said that they have absolutely no Internet in their homes."

Sen. John Kerry says we need this technology to compete as a nation.

"When I ran for president in 2004," he said, "one of the major proposals that I did make was putting in place a national broadband plan that would bring America within four years to number one in the world. We have gone instead over the last 8 years from number 4 to number 15."