



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF  
HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, ROOM 2101  
BOSTON, MA 02108  
[www.mass.gov/eohed](http://www.mass.gov/eohed)

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

GREGORY BIALECKI  
SECRETARY

TELEPHONE  
(617) 788-3610

FACSIMILE  
(617) 788-3605

**COMMUNICATIONS CONTACTS:**

**KOFI JONES**

Director of Communications  
(617) 788-3652 (voice)  
(617) 721-2231 (cell)  
[Kofi.jones@state.ma.us](mailto:Kofi.jones@state.ma.us)

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**DARRELL LEMAR**

Deputy Director of Communications (EOHED)  
(617) 788-3655 (voice)  
(617) 686-6908 (cell)  
[Darrell.LeMar@state.ma.us](mailto:Darrell.LeMar@state.ma.us)

**GOVERNOR PATRICK APPOINTS SHARON GILLETT AS DIRECTOR OF  
THE MASSACHUSETTS BROADBAND INSTITUTE**

BOSTON – Wednesday, April 29, 2009 – Governor Deval Patrick today announced the appointment of Sharon E. Gillett as Director of the Massachusetts Broadband Institute – an agency working to bridge the digital divide and deliver the benefits of high-speed Internet, or broadband, service to every community in the Commonwealth by 2011.

“Investing in broadband is essential to ensuring that our businesses can compete in the global economy, that our children receive the highest quality education, and that our citizens have access to high quality health care and other vital public safety services,” said Governor Patrick. “I am confident that Sharon’s leadership and expertise will be a tremendous asset as we accelerate broadband deployment efforts throughout the state.”

Gillett was tapped two years ago by Governor Patrick to serve as the first commissioner of the newly established Department of Telecommunications and Cable, a statewide regulatory agency that oversees telecommunications and cable television services. She has spent more than a decade working on broadband and telecommunications issues at the state and federal levels.

Governor Patrick signed landmark legislation in August 2008 creating the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) to make strategic investments and harness public-private partnerships to develop broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved communities. The MBI Board of Directors unanimously approved the appointment of Sharon Gillett as the Director.

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The MBI will make strategic investments in broadband infrastructure assets, such as fiber-optic cables and wireless towers, thereby lowering the overall cost of deployment for private providers. The MBI manages the new Massachusetts Broadband Incentive Fund, which is capitalized by \$40 million in state bond funding. The MBI is overseen by a nine-person governing board and housed within the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, a public economic development agency that has supported broadband solutions during the past ten years.

“Commissioner Gillett is the perfect choice to lead the MBI at this critical juncture,” said Rachelle Chong, California Public Utilities Commissioner and a former FCC Commissioner. “I have had the privilege of working with her via the national association of state utility commissioners, and she is regarded there as one of the leading telecommunications experts in the nation, with extensive expertise in telecommunications, cable and Internet policy.”

Ray Baum, Oregon’s Public Utility Commissioner and the Chairman of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners’ Committee on Telecommunications, said, “Commissioner Gillett has been an invaluable member of the NARUC Telecommunications Committee. Her keen intellect and in-depth knowledge of broadband issues will be sorely missed. However, as head of the new Massachusetts Broadband Institute, she will continue to use that knowledge for the benefit of the citizens of Massachusetts.”

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides \$7.2 billion in funding to help states that are ready to deploy broadband in unserved and underserved areas. The Massachusetts broadband initiative means that, under the Patrick Administration, the Commonwealth has already commenced the work required to seize the extraordinary opportunity to attract significant federal funding. Working closely with Governor Patrick and leaders in Washington, Gillett has been a leading and respected voice advancing broadband solutions, making her uniquely suited to position the Commonwealth for success.

“I want to thank Governor Patrick for his leadership on this important issue and for giving me this exciting opportunity to continue serving the public,” said Gillett. “Expanding broadband services will help ensure that all Massachusetts communities are open for business. We have a tremendous opportunity to work with the Obama Administration to attract federal funding that will help us deliver better broadband to every corner of the Commonwealth.”

Prior to serving as Commissioner of DTC, Gillett was a Principal Research Associate at MIT’s School of Engineering, specializing in broadband-related public policy. She served as chair of the Broadband Working Group for the industry-sponsored Communications Futures Program at MIT and was a member of the Boston Wireless Task Force established by Mayor Thomas Menino. She has published peer-reviewed articles on broadband policy issues and has served as a lecturer and researcher at both MIT and Cambridge University in the UK. She was also a principal at Victory Research, an independent consulting firm focused on broadband and telecommunications. Gillett will work to ensure a smooth transition at DTC and begin serving at the MBI on May 1, 2009.

Gillett received an AB, *cum laude*, in physics from Harvard-Radcliffe College, a MS in the Technology and Policy Program from MIT, and a MBA from Sloan School of Management at MIT. Gillett and her husband, Walter, have two sons and live in Lexington, Massachusetts.

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*The Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development is one of eight Secretariats that make up the Governor’s Cabinet. Under the leadership of Secretary Gregory Bialecki, the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development oversees the following undersecretariats: the Departments of Business Development, Housing and Community Development, and Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation.*