**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Commonwealth of Kentucky and Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts Announce Data from Public Statewide Internet Use Survey**

(FRANKFORT, Ky.)—The Commonwealth Office of Broadband Outreach and Development (OBOD) and the Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts (KCADD) announced today the results of a statewide public survey asking Kentuckians about their broadband access and use patterns.

The reports are based on data collected from February through April 2012 across Kentucky. More than 2,000 businesses/organizations and 4,000 households contributed to the Kentucky broadband benchmarking effort. Highlights from the survey responses:

* Over 19 percent of households “definitely” would relocate to another community for broadband service if it was not available to them in their current location. Another 20 percent “very likely” would consider relocation.
* Broadband was considered “essential” for selecting location by 36 percent of businesses and other organizations, as well as “essential” for remaining in location by 59 percent of organizations.
* Key gaps in Internet utilization are focused on household income, age, skill level, degree of “rurality”, and organizational size and industry sector.
* Internet use and productivity decrease proportionately based upon lower income and higher age.
* Small to medium sized organizations provide great potential for growth. This segment:
  + Includes 95 percent of all establishments and 43 percent of all employment in Kentucky
  + Has the lowest or weakest utilization levels compared to organizations with larger numbers of employees
  + Is a dynamic engine for employment growth, especially through use of the Internet
  + Has the least capacity and expertise to adopt more sophisticated and productive Internet applications

“The expansion and increased adoption of Broadband will empower Kentucky people and businesses to take advantage of greater education and employment opportunities and will result in advancements in eHealth, business, government services, and communication. This will be a key element in growing Kentucky’s digital economy,” said Brian Kiser, executive director of the OBOD.

“We are sincere about making positive changes for Kentucky. We are eager to begin deconstructing barriers Kentuckians are facing with broadband services and to work to promote a healthy, vibrant, and advanced Commonwealth,” said Abby Caldwell, director of communications and special projects for the KCADD.

The survey is part of the Broadband KY initiative led by the OBOD and KCADD. Full survey results will be available for download Monday, July 23, 2012 at [www.broadband.ky.gov](http://www.broadband.ky.gov).

This project has three main goals: to gain an understanding of the availability of broadband and the usage of broadband across Kentucky (i.e. who is using broadband and how they are using it in their daily activities); to identify opportunities for growth in broadband availability and use; and to develop strategies for targeting growth in un/underserved areas and in areas where populations are not taking advantage of broadband tools to facilitate personal and economic growth.

“These broadband survey results provide strategic information for analysis and planning to increase productive Internet use. This will help achieve real benefits such as jobs, economic development and improved quality of life for the citizens of Kentucky where many face the challenges of economic dislocation and population shifts from rural to urban areas,” said Bob Lois, broadband program manager with Michael Baker, Jr. Inc. “One of our goals on this project is to help Kentuckians leverage the potential of high-speed Internet access into tangible benefits for their communities, businesses and households.”

Governor Beshear established the OBOD in October 2010. This Office continues work to identify areas un-served and under-served, by affordable broadband, throughout the state, and to facilitate greater understanding and partnerships which work toward providing all Kentuckians with these critical capabilities into the future.

The KCADD comprises 15 regional Area Development Districts (ADDs) that provide a multi-disciplinary approach to regional trouble-shooting by working with elected leadership to strengthen the physical environment and enhance the quality of life in Kentucky. Under the Council’s leadership, the ADDs have managed over 5,763 projects and contracts valued at $2.8 billion, and have generated a return of more than $100 for every dollar in local government dues each year. Among those are programs to assist the elderly, improve the state’s infrastructure, provide housing assistance, facilitate economic development, develop a strong workforce, improve water and wastewater practices, and advance public health.

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