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MBI Announces an Agreement with the Massachusetts Information Technology Division and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to Advance the *MassBroadband 123* Network

Westborough, MA (April 25, 2011) – The MBI today announced that it achieved an important milestone by finalizing its agreement with the Massachusetts Information Technology Division and Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to advance the *MassBroadband 123* network and strengthen public safety and other core services in western and north central Massachusetts. These agencies will be the first customers on the *MassBroadband 123* fiber-optic network and will utilize the network to provide broadband services for a 25-year renewable term. As anchor tenants, the agencies will also provide a committed, consistent source of revenue that will help ensure the long-term sustainability of the *MassBroadband 123* network.

The Information Technology Division (ITD) and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) will expand high-speed Internet services to over 400 state agencies and public safety entities in the region. Extending broadband connectivity is critical to connect residents with important state services and enable the region's public safety and emergency entities to access and share essential public safety information.

In March, the MBI signed an agreement with Axia NGNetworks USA to serve as the network operator for the *MassBroadband 123* network. Axia will provide wholesale services on the network to broadband services providers, who will connect residents, businesses and remaining community anchor institutions in the region.

“This is an important step toward improving public safety, expanding critical services in the region and ensuring that our network is sustainable for decades to come,” said MBI Director Judith Dumont. “I want to thank the Patrick-Murray Administration and all of our state partners for their tremendous collaboration, as we work to extend broadband access and bridge the digital divide.”

“The **MassBroadband 123** network will provide the necessary infrastructure to connect unserved and underserved areas to vital services,” said Jason Snyder, the state’s Chief Technology Officer. “Residents will be able to access services from state agencies such as the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department of Veterans’ Services and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, which will enhance community and economic development in the region.”

“It’s critical that our first responders have instant access to cutting-edge technologies and the most up-to-date information to keep all of our residents safe,” said Secretary Mary Elizabeth Heffernan, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security. “The **MassBroadband 123** network will ensure that public safety entities have the connections and bandwidth they need to provide superior services for the residents of western and north central Massachusetts.”

The **MassBroadband 123** network will expand broadband access to over 400 public safety facilities in the region, including more than 250 police stations and 911 call centers that will be connected by EOPSS. There are currently more than 100 police stations in the region with limited or no access to the state’s public safety information network. A broadband connection will provide these departments with enhanced access to the state’s criminal justice and public safety information systems.

The **MassBroadband 123** network will also provide communications interoperability among public safety agencies, which will allow better coordination and a faster and safer emergency response. As police and fire departments across the Commonwealth plan for Next Generation 911, broadband connectivity is required to share photos, video and other digital information to assist police, fire and emergency personnel in responding to the public’s calls for help.

MassBroadband 123 will also connect state agencies in the region, including the Massachusetts Department of Veterans’ Services, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, which oversees One-Stop Career Centers for employment and job training. Extending broadband access to state agencies will help deliver innovative services to residents, while reducing costs and increasing the efficiency of services provided. The **MassBroadband 123** network will connect close to 1,400 community anchor institutions in the region, including libraries, hospitals, schools and public safety entities. The 1,338 mile fiber-optic Internet backbone network, which will be completed in summer 2013, will expand broadband services to over 120 communities in western and north central Massachusetts.

MassBroadband 123 is a critical component of the Patrick-Murray Administration’s initiative to expand broadband connectivity across the state. The MBI was awarded \$45.4 million in federal stimulus funding to develop the **MassBroadband 123** network. The Commonwealth is providing \$26.2 million in matching funds, bringing the total public investment in the project to \$71.6 million.

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About the MBI

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) is working to extend affordable high-speed Internet access to all homes, businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices and other public places across the Commonwealth. Governor Patrick created the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, a division of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, when he signed the Broadband Act into law in August 2008. The Act gives the MBI the authority to invest up to \$40 million of state bond funds in necessary and long-lived infrastructure assets, such as conduits, fiber-optic cable and wireless towers. For more information on the MBI, please visit www.massbroadband.org.