April 16, 2013

Wisconsin Public Library Directors:

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is partnering with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC-W) to promote and encourage participation in residential and business demand surveys in Wisconsin through May 2013. We strongly believe that this survey can help encourage expansion and development of broadband Internet services, particularly in underserved areas, and we would like to ask for your help in promoting these surveys.

PSC-W, through the LinkWisconsin project, has partnered with University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to assess the broadband needs and gaps in our state with the goal of identifying rural areas that are either underserved or not served at all with broadband.

Based on preliminary residential surveys, some residents of our state have indicated the availability and speed of their current broadband is inadequate for their needs. We at DPI know that equitable access to Internet across the state supports learning to occur anywhere, anytime; by supporting this survey we hope that we can begin to address the digital divide experienced in many regions of the state.

Results will be used in two ways: 1) locations will be mapped to show unmet needs or demand for high speed Internet; 2) submissions will be used to communicate need to area Internet providers.

We hope you will share information with your staff, patrons, local businesses, and communities to help drive strong survey results. There are templates available for you to customize and use here (shortened link): http://1.usa.gov/17f27Rh. These templates include handouts ("backpack mail"), Facebook and Twitter messages, newsletter templates, and press releases.

Residential Internet access survey is here: http://wisconsindashboard.org/residence-survey
Business owners are encouraged to fill out this survey for business broadband needs: http://wisconsindashboard.org/business-survey

More information about the LinkWISCONSIN project can be found at http://www.link.wisconsin.gov.

Questions on the project, project background, communications tools or other can be directed to Tithi Chattopadhyay, State Broadband Director, PSC-W: PSCStateBroadbandOffice@wisconsin.gov

Thank you for your time and assistance with this project.

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