CSI OFFERS KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW THE FCC NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN CAN WORK

March 16, 2010 New York, NY— The Center for Social Inclusion and the Mississippi State Conference NAACP today issued some key recommendations for the Federal Communications Commission’s National Broadband Plan. The two organizations charge that unless the FCC’s blueprint for better broadband service brings broadband to low-income communities and communities of color it will fail to prepare our economy for the future. After a public hearing on the issue, hosted by the Center for Social Inclusion, the MS-NAACP and Congressman Bennie G. Thompson of Mississippi’s 2nd Congressional District, our organizations filed strategic recommendations with the FCC, which include:

- Provide federal support for projects that expand infrastructure, create jobs, promote community access, and develop demand;
- Make broadband a universal service under the Universal Service Fund Lifeline program or support other subsidies that guarantee affordability in low-income communities and communities of color;
- Require recipients of federal support to collect and publish data on the communities that benefit from each project, including the impact on low-income communities and communities of color; and
- Address last mile challenges for institutions that are vital for the public welfare such as health care facilities, schools, libraries and employment centers.

“A key component for improving our economy is affordable high-quality Internet service. In communities without it, businesses locate elsewhere, students are deprived of vital resources, and jobs are scarce. If low-income communities and communities of color are left out of the National Broadband Plan, we’ll have missed a powerful opportunity to generate real economic recovery. Our recommendations create benchmarks to measure the impact of our investments in this essential infrastructure.” said Brittny Saunders, senior advocate of the Center for Social Inclusion.”

The Center for Social Inclusion works with local and national organizations to develop policy ideas, foster leadership, and create communication tools that help communities of color dismantle structural barriers to opportunity.

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