



Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz on NPR's Colin McEnroe Show: Will Connecticut Be the Next Gig City?



On May 1, 2014, Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz was a guest on NPR's Colin McEnroe show with Blair Levin and Lon Seidman. Presently, Chattanooga, Tennessee is leading the way nationally with its low-cost ubiquitous internet network; the following link is the NPR article: <http://wnpr.org/post/will-connecticut-be-next-gig-city>. This segment explores whether conditions in Connecticut are ripe for a similar network. Consumer Counsel Katz discussed the need for high-speed internet deployment in Connecticut given that many municipalities in Connecticut are currently considering their options.

Consumer Counsel Katz responded to a question that it is highly likely that Connecticut will remain competitive by introducing ultra-high speed broadband services in one or more of its municipalities very soon. Katz noted that she had hosted an OCC Broadband Conference on April 11, 2014 which featured a broad spectrum of panelists addressing the opportunities and challenges for municipalities seeking to bring "gig" service to their communities. Blair Levin was the keynote speaker at the OCC Broadband Conference. The state government has passed a number of statutes expanding the opportunities for municipalities to access the utility poles to develop fiber networks, and funding to connect municipalities to the statewide fiber network, known as the Nutmeg Network.



Consumer Counsel Katz noted that by the 2014 – 2015 school year, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium will develop a system of assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11 aligned to Common Core State Standards. As has been demonstrated in schools across Connecticut, the introduction of new technology (e.g., iPads in the classroom) has a history of “crashing” Wi-Fi systems and thus advanced broadband services must be accounted for prior to the introduction of education innovations in order for them to succeed.

Blair Levin is the architect of the Federal Communication Commission’s (FCC) National Broadband Plan, Chief of Staff to FCC Chairman Reed Hundt, and Executive Director of Gig.U, a collaborative of 40 research universities, including the University of Connecticut, across the country attempting to expand access to gigabit service into the communities surrounding their campuses. Lon Seidman is the technology writer for CTNewsJunkie.com

To listen to the segment, click [here](#).