



Press Release

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Contact Info:

Juana Medina

juana@gamalielmetrochi.org

1-618-698-4975

Gamaliel of Illinois' Access to Broadband Campaign #ConnectMe, advocates for broadband to become part of public utility.

Gamaliel of Illinois affiliates are fighting for broadband internet access as a public utility. It is widely known that vulnerable communities including low income, disabled, elderly, immigrant, reentry populations as well as others, have struggled for some time now with obtaining and maintaining internet access for their needs. If broadband can be part of a public utility, it would help alleviate the fears and barriers involved with meeting educational needs, transportation, employment, communication for disabilities and family support, safety for domestic violence victims, completing applications for assistance and maintaining medical needs such as counseling, and ordering/delivering medicines, amongst others.

The access to broadband campaign, #ConnectMe has gathered growing support for decreasing the digital divide from legislators, like Illinois state Senator Tony Muñoz (D-Chicago), who is the sponsor of Senate Bill 3998, which would require the Broadband Advisory council to explore the feasibility of universal or public broadband. Illinois state Senator Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill) is planning to co-sponsor the measure and has given his full support to the campaign.

Gamaliel of Illinois is an affiliate of the 15-state Gamaliel Network, a faith-based, multi-ethnic, multi-racial grassroots organization whose mission is: a) to train ordinary people, primarily in low-income communities and communities of color, to effectively participate in the political, environmental, social, and economic decisions affecting their lives; and b) to build a diverse corps of grassroots leaders committed to transforming the systems and structures that perpetuate racial and comic inequity. Gamaliel of IL affiliates include:

Gamaliel of Metro Chicago, Quad Cities Interfaith, Faith Coalition for the Common Good in Springfield and United Congregations of Metro East.