Below are some comments and answers to those particularly numbered questions.

4. What are the critical data and research needs in the areas of broadband deployment and access?

Critical data and research needs could include the effect of broadband deployment on economic activity and growth, and on educational outcomes (by county). This could also include the effect of broadband access on returning citizens. For example, knowing their rights as re-entering citizens (can dispute discrimination on the basis of status as 'ex-offender' or learn about organizations that can do that on their behalf), or the possibility of a lower risk of reoffending due to a better ability to improve numeracy, literacy and digital skills? Improved employability?

7. What are the critical data and research needs in the areas of broadband adoption and utilization?

Critical data and research needs could include the amount of Americans without basic digital skills (leads to item under questions 19). This could also include the cost savings for taxpayers associated with digitizing government services

9. What specific research and data are needed to understand how rural residents and other population groups that have traditionally under-utilized broadband technology (e.g., seniors, low-income families, persons with disabilities) can better adopt and use broadband?

Specific research and data could include awareness of financial benefits of using the Internet amongst these groups, and awareness of career opportunities and potential in the tech sector amongst these groups.

10. What are the critical data and research needs in the area of broadband and its economic and social impact?

Critical data and research needs could include the current shortage in digital skills amongst the unemployed, and the affect this has on business growth. This could also include the percentage of companies that are suffering tech skill gaps, leaving job vacancies unfilled; and, the availability of IT courses in public secondary schools. For example, is learning tech skills mandatory in the same way science and math skills are considered mandatory? Are students leaving school digitally literate enough to compete in the workforce?

Since the Internet provides open access to training, support and information on health and wellbeing, is there a decreased burden on healthcare services as a result of this? What is the effect of broadband access on educational outcomes for low-income families, including: electronic forms for financial aid; centralized location on eligibility, deadlines, applications. Lastly, the effect of broadband usage on knowledge and usage of government services, including housing, federal benefits, SNAP, insurance, unemployment, and social security.

19. What are recommendations for standardizing broadband and commonly-used demographic terms across the research community? How can these terms be operationalized to ensure

comparability of data?

One suggestion would be federal guidelines on the core competencies behind 'basic digital skills.'

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