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BAY AREA RESIDENTS CONNECTED, ACCORDING TO NEW POLL

BAY AREA, April 14, 2008 —Bay Area residents continue to outpace the rest of the United States in the adoption of high-speed internet connections at home, according to results of the 2008 *Bay Area Council Poll* of 601 residents released today. The Bay Area, as a region, is far ahead of the rest of the country in broadband adoption at 76 percent, versus 47 percent of the total U.S. population in 2007 according to the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Usage of dial-up is almost obsolete across the region. Only five years ago, in 2003, 36 percent of residents reported having a modem connection at home, while today only a mere three percent have this type of connection.

Internet connectivity varied only slightly across the region. Overall, 80 percent of residents reported having internet access at home. Contra Costa had the lowest number of internet connections at 71 percent, while 24 percent reported no connection at all. On the high end, 87 percent of Alameda residents reported having internet at home with 8 percent having no connection.

“The Bay Area continues to blaze the trail in terms of broadband adoption in the United States,” said Jim Wunderman the president and CEO of the Bay Area Council. “But worldwide, our competitors are doing better. In an information-driven economy, our global competitiveness depends on improving our broadband infrastructure.”

According to the World Economic Forum’s “The Global Information Technology Report 2006-2007,” the United States ranks only 7th in the world in its readiness for adoption of information and communication technologies. A recent study by the international Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found that in terms of percentage of homes connected via broadband, the United States ranks 24th, behind countries such as Estonia. In addition, many other countries have broadband speeds that are 10- or even 50-times faster than what is generally available in the Bay Area.

The “Digital Divide” was apparent in the *Bay Area Council Poll* results. While 93 percent of those with an income greater than \$80,000 have internet access at home, only 59 percent of respondents with an income lower than \$40,000 do so. Ninety-one percent of college graduates in the region have an internet connection at home, while 51 percent that reported an education level of high school or less were connected.

Political activism had some effect on internet connectivity though political affiliation did not. While registered voters were more likely to have an internet connection than those who were not registered (85 percent versus 65 percent), Democrats and Republicans were nearly equally connected at 83 percent and 85 percent respectively.

About the Bay Area Poll

A total of 601 residents of the nine-county Bay Area were surveyed in English and Spanish by Field Research Corporation during the period of March 4-14, 2008. Survey respondents were selected using a random probability sampling technique that gives all residents with telephones (listed or not) an equal chance of being selected for the survey. The sample was stratified to obtain representative samples in each of six Bay Area regions: Alameda County, Contra Costa County, San Francisco County, San Mateo County, Santa Clara County and the North Bay counties of Marin, Napa, Solano and Sonoma. After the completion of interviewing, the sample was weighted to conform to actual population estimates of the nine-county Bay Area. Findings are subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

About the Bay Area Council

Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council (www.bayareacouncil.org) develops and drives regional public policy initiatives and researches critical infrastructure issues. Led by CEOs, the Bay Area Council presents a strong, united voice for hundreds of major employers throughout the Bay Area region whom employ more than 500,000 workers, or 1 of every six private sector employees in the Bay Area.