

Comments on Improving the Quality and Accuracy of Broadband Availability Data

NTIA, on behalf of the Department of Commerce, requested comment on actions that can be taken to improve the quality and accuracy of broadband availability data, particularly in rural areas, as part of the activities directed by Congress in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018. Comments were due on July 16, 2018. Below is a sampling of the over 50 comments received.

North Carolina Department of Information Technology's Broadband Infrastructure Office: "In the absence of subscription and infrastructure location from the internet service providers, an index, considering several relevant data layers, can be used to draw a more granular and instructive map."

NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association: "An accurate database would benefit all Federal, state and local agencies who rely on broadband deployment data for issuing funding for new broadband deployment; providers looking to expand into unserved areas; and broadband providers who would only need to report their deployment data to one agency."

West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council: "The Council continues to advocate for address-level data and speed test results obtained from the public for submission to the FCC to augment the FCC Form 477 data set. The FCC should accept actual "on-the-ground" service data from state agencies that are based on speed test results collected from the public. The FCC can then incorporate this data with data it receives from providers."

USTelecom – The Broadband Association: "The biggest problem is not an inaccurate view of where broadband exists, it is that unserved locations are not mapped," the group said, recommending that "NTIA concentrate its limited resources on augmenting the National Broadband Map with a more fulsome set of rural geocoded locations that may exist in the hands of other government entities."

Wireless Internet Service Providers Association (WISPA): "...data-collection efforts that seek broadband deployment at the sub-census block level will create new burdens on small broadband providers that will be ill-equipped to provide information at a more granular level."

[See the complete comments here.](#)

Broadband News and Updates

Federal News

- [Billion Dollar-Plus FCC CAF II Auction Begins](#)
- [Telehealth Changes Could Help Rural Seniors Age in Place](#)
- [WISPA Outlines Broadband Fixed Wireless Economics, Policy Goals Before Congress](#)
- [NTIA Blog: Connectivity with a Purpose](#)
- [Senate Farm Bill Would Put New Limits on RUS Broadband Loan Program](#)
- [NIST takes Interoperability to new heights](#)
- [NTIA Blog: New Data Show Substantial Gains and Evolution in Internet Use](#)
- [FCC Speeds Access to Utility Poles to Promote Broadband, 5G Deployment](#)

State News

- Washington: [Kilmer, colleague present legislation to bridge broadband access gap](#)
- Tennessee: [Chattanooga Catches the Telehealth Bug](#)
- Kentucky: [Statewide Broadband on Track for 2019-20](#)
- Iowa: [In Iowa and elsewhere in rural America, glacial broadband speeds conflict with FCC reports](#)
- Michigan: [Despite Forward Progress, Broadband Access Remains an Issue in Michigan](#)
- Oregon: [Pai, Walden | Bridging the rural technology divide](#)

Broadband Data and Mapping

- [US Broadband Mapping Vital, Industry Says In NTIA Talks](#)
- [ACT: NTIA More Likely Than FCC to Produce Unbiased Broadband Report](#)

Public Safety/FirstNet

- [FirstNet board expected to get at least three new members, new leadership as early as August](#)
- [AT&T execs say FirstNet buildout will be at least 40% done within a year, note importance to 5G strategy](#)
- [Public Safety Advocacy: Harnessing the Power of Public Safety Input for their Network](#)
- [Connecting Communities through Strong Mobile Networks Improves Services and Safety](#)

Smart Community and 5G News

- [AT&T adds Charlotte, Raleigh and Oklahoma City to mobile 5G service plan](#)
- [More than IoT: How to Build a Smart City](#)
- [5G Compromise Bill Still a Hit to Local Government](#)
- [High-speed Wi-Fi at ag research center may be blueprint for rural communities](#)
- [New CTIA Annual Survey Shows Beginning of Evolution to Next-Generation Networks](#)

Funding

- [US-Ignite Announces \\$50 Million Available for Round Funding: Platforms for Advanced Wireless Research](#)
- [USDA Invites Comments on the Implementation of the e-Connectivity Pilot Program](#)
- [USDA Invests \\$97 Million in Rural Broadband Infrastructure to Improve Service for 22,000 Subscribers in 11 States](#)

General News

- [Google offering free digital skills workshops in Alabama](#)
- [American Farm Bureau President Joins Connected Nation Board](#)
- [By Gluing Fiber to the Ground, Startup Thinks It Can Slash Broadband Installation Costs for Local Government](#)
- [Balfour Beatty Communities Secures Broadband Fiber Optic Network for Vandenberg AFB Families](#)

BroadbandUSA Spotlight

NTIA Files FCC Petition to Update Wireless Priority Service Program

NTIA filed a Petition for Rulemaking with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to update the rules governing Wireless Priority Service (WPS), a program that enables wireless emergency calls to get through if networks are congested. NTIA filed the petition on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency Communications (OEC), which manages priority telecommunications programs. The petition asks for some increased WPS capabilities, including the following changes:

- Permit WPS voice calls for a small subset of high-priority WPS users, if needed, to preempt or degrade in-progress, non-911 calls;
- Extend priority services beyond just voice calls to include data, text, and video services;
- Require WPS providers and users to provide DHS performance data needed to evaluate program effectiveness;
- Modify the rules to reflect authorities, organizations and requirements that were not in existence at the time the rules were approved; and
- Reflect current capabilities not present or envisioned at the onset of the program, e.g., end-to-end priority, new methods of invoking priority, and refines the rules used to approve and categorize the WPS user base.

[Read this NTIA blog for more information.](#)

Events

NTIA Events

September 19, 2018

[BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series: How to Decide the Right Technological Approach to Infrastructure](#) (See details in column on right.) (BroadbandUSA will not host a webinar in August.)

October 30, 2018

[BroadbandUSA and the Center for Innovative Technology \(CIT\) Virginia Broadband Summit](#), Roanoke, VA. (See details in column on right.)

Events of Interest

August 9, 2018

Mississippi Center for Emergency Services at the University of Mississippi Medical Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

August 22 - 23, 2018

[Oregon Coastal Caucus Economic Summit 2018](#), Lincoln City, OR. Hosted by the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, the summit is designed to advance the region's economic development and policy interests. BroadbandUSA Speaker: Karen Perry

August 27, 2018

[National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors \(NATOA\) 38th Annual Local Government Conference](#), Philadelphia, PA. Pre-conference Workshop: "Smart Communities Pre-Conference Workshop: How Smart are You?" BroadbandUSA Speaker: Jean Rice

August 27, 2018

[2018 NSF Smart and Connected Communities \(S&CC\) Aspiring PI Workshop](#), Kansas City, MO. The S&CC Aspiring PI workshop will assemble a group of aspiring PIs with diverse backgrounds across disciplines and sectors, ranging from economists and sociologists to computer scientists and engineers to city and community stakeholders. BroadbandUSA Speaker: Katherine Bates

September 6-7, 2018

[Smart Agriculture and Rural Broadband SuperCluster. GCTC -Smart and Secure Cities and Communities Challenge](#), West Lafayette, IN. Participants will learn about funding opportunities, a showcase of smart ag and rural projects and actively participate in writing a blueprint document. BroadbandUSA Speaker: Jean Rice

September 16-19, 2018

[HBCU Competitiveness: Aligning Institutional Missions with America's Priorities](#), Washington, DC. The annual National Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Week Conference is planned under the direction of the White House Initiative on HBCUs and with input from the Chairman of the President's Board of Advisors on HBCUs and other supporters. BroadbandUSA Speaker: Francine Alkisswani

September 20, 2018

[2018 Georgia Broadband Summit hosted by the Georgia Municipal Association \(GMA\)](#) "Federal Funding Programs Panel", Warner Robins, GA. GMA will host a one-day statewide Rural Broadband Summit to share information with local officials about rural broadband planning in Georgia.

September 23-26, 2018

[104th ICMA Annual Conference](#), Baltimore, MD. The ICMA Annual Conference is the largest annual event in the world for local government managers and staff. This is a forum for pursuing the common task of building sustainable communities and improving the lives of people worldwide.

September 23-26, 2018

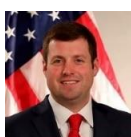
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Policy Corner

On June 18, David J. Redl, Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), submitted comments to Ajit Pai, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission (FCC), regarding accelerating wireline broadband deployment. Below is an excerpt.



NTIA has consistently supported network modernization because it will both significantly reduce carriers' operating and maintenance costs and enable carriers to expand and enhance the services they can offer subscribers. NTIA remains concerned, however, that streamlined regulatory requirements may place federal departments and agencies that rely on services subject to discontinuance in the untenable position of losing access to critical national security and public safety communications functionality.

[See the complete letter here.](#)

Webinars

BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series

Topic: [How to Decide the Right Technological Approach to Infrastructure](#)

Date: Wednesday, Sept. 19, 2018

Time: 2:00 PM Eastern

(Note: BroadbandUSA will not host a webinar in August.)

Want to access past Practical Broadband Conversations webinars?

Visit our [Webinar Archives](#) for past presentations, transcripts and audio recordings.

Events

BroadbandUSA and the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) Virginia Broadband Summit

Date: October 30, 2018

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., ET

Location: Roanoke, VA.

The purpose of the summit is to gather information from the public and stakeholders on how to accelerate broadband connectivity, improve digital inclusion, and support local priorities. The summit will provide information on topics including local broadband planning, funding and engagement with service providers. Speakers and attendees from Virginia, federal agencies and across the country will explore ways to facilitate the expansion of broadband capacity, access, and utilization.

The summit will be held at the [Roanoke South County Library](#), 6303 Merriman Road, Roanoke, VA 24018.

[Pre-registration is requested](#) as space is limited.



NTIA's BroadbandUSA program promotes innovation and economic growth by supporting efforts to expand broadband connectivity and digital inclusion across America. In this role, BroadbandUSA serves state and local government, industry and non-profits that want to expand broadband infrastructure and promote digital inclusion.

Contact Us

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