



BroadbandUSA's State Broadband Leadership Network

Access to broadband has many benefits for Americans. It connects Americans with friends and family across the country, and can transform communities by giving students access to better educational resources or connecting an entrepreneur to clients around the world. While America's broadband infrastructure is continuing to grow, many Americans in rural communities cannot afford to pay for broadband services or do not have the necessary equipment to access broadband services. Expanding infrastructure is costly, especially in rural communities with sparse populations and large distances to connect.

State leaders looking to develop funding programs can find resources through BroadbandUSA, a program operated by the National Telecommunications & Information Administration. BroadbandUSA's State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN) works to connect leaders from across state governments to learn more about best practices and setting priorities. The network helps state leaders to identify federal funding sources, and build relationships with other state policy makers. SBLN hosts an annual meeting, teleconferences, webinars, and other events and workshops to build awareness of available resources.

Many states are working actively to expand access to broadband and develop funding for broadband. For example, the state of Nevada's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology (OSIT) has a state broadband program focused on assisting Nevada schools and libraries to apply for federal broadband funding and providing grants to connect schools to faster Internet. The program works with rural communities to develop whole community connectivity plans; and develops partnerships to increase the use of telemedicine in hospitals, health clinics, and correctional facilities. Recently, OSIT created the Nevada Connect Kids Initiative in order to maximize the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) E-rate program with state matching funds. Also, in October, 2017, the state formed the Nevada Telecommunications Advisory Committee to work directly with the Nevada Department of Transportation to implement Nevada's "Dig Once" program, requiring the state to add excess conduit into any road construction project.

These and other Nevada efforts will be discussed at a January 11, 2019, NTIA public workshop in Nevada to bring together stakeholders from across the state to explore ways to facilitate the expansion of broadband capacity, access, and utilization. Please check our website for additional information about BroadbandUSA's [Nevada Broadband Workshop](#).

Upcoming Rural Health Webinar - December 13

The Global Cities Team Challenge Smart Agriculture and Rural SuperCluster, which is facilitated by NTIA and NIST, is hosting a webinar on the Rural Health Initiative on December 13 at 1pm ET. The webinar will discuss the launch of the Rural Health Initiative (RHI) to improve access to high-quality healthcare in rural America. CoBank, WTA Foundation, and Perry Health are the founding sponsors of the Initiative, which seeks to help healthcare providers, including hospitals, clinics and behavioral/mental health agencies to bring high quality care into patient homes. Tailored for rural settings, Perry's software offers providers the ability to deliver digital care plans, remotely monitor health metrics, and provide interventions via telemedicine through an app-based platform. The RHI intends to work with various stakeholders to address a community's specific health issue challenges, such as diabetes, opioid abuse, heart failure, and lung-related diseases. The scheduled webinar speakers include Sarah Tyree, Vice President, Policy and Public Affairs, CoBank; and Anshu Vaish, CEO, Perry Health. NTIA's Jean Rice will moderate. For more information, contact jrice@ntia.doc.gov. [WebEx Webinar Site](#) No pass code needed. Meeting code is 740128910. Call in: 866-860-0870; passcode: 74729120

Broadband News and Updates

Federal News

- NTIA: [BroadbandUSA Announces Nevada Broadband Workshop, Jan. 11, 2019, in Carson City](#)
- NTIA: [Road Map: Building a More Resilient Internet](#)
- NTIA: [ITS Releases Best Practices Handbook for Propagation Measurements](#)
- [NTIA Releases Comments on a Proposed Approach to Protecting Consumer Privacy](#)
- [NTIA Closes First Phase of Grant Program that Laid Groundwork for FirstNet](#)
- [USDA: Perdue Hopes to Have "Solid Plan" by Year-End for \\$600M USDA Rural Broadband Pilot](#)
- [\\$91 Million in USDA Rural Broadband Funding Awarded in 12 States](#)
- [Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants Target Telehealth Programs from Maine to the Marianas](#)
- [Treasury's Office of the Comptroller of the Currency Releases Broadband-Focused Community Development Investment November News](#)
- [FCC Boosts Satellite Broadband Connectivity and Competition in the United States](#)
- [Vice-President Pence Announces US-ASEAN 'Smart Cities Partnership'](#)
- Survey: [The General Services Administration \(GSA\) is seeking input on: \(a\) incentivizing State and local governments to provide real property data on assets suitable for communications facility installations \(like broadband\); and \(b\) the possibility of establishing a database where State and local Governments can voluntarily submit this data.](#)

State News

- Arkansas: [Arkansas Telehealth Partnership Reduces Stroke-Related Deaths](#)
- California: [The Golden State's Economy Shines Brighter When Rural California is Thriving](#)
- Mississippi: [PSC's Proposal is Much-needed Solution to Rural Broadband 'Deserts'](#)
- Montana and Washington: [Native Network and Microsoft Announce Agreement to Deliver Broadband Internet to Rural Communities in Montana and Washington](#)
- Oregon: [Facebook Could Lay Fiber Broadband Along Central Oregon Highways](#)
- Pennsylvania: [Penn State Study Finding Rural Broadband Speeds are Even Slower than Suspected](#)
- Vermont: [Vermont Official Drives All Over the Map Checking Cellphone Signals](#) and [Could Vermont Become the First State With Universal Broadband?](#)
- Virginia: [Northam Touts Broadband Access, Workforce at Rural Summit](#) and [Virginia State Senators Announce Funding to Bring Broadband Access to Eastern Shore](#)
- Washington State: [Washington State Community Economic Revitalization Board Invests \\$225,000 in Grants That Will Support Community and Economic Development in Clallam, Okanogan, Spokane, and Whatcom Counties.](#)
- Wyoming: [Speakers Discuss Barriers, Solutions to Statewide Broadband Access](#) (Governor's Business Forum in Cheyenne included such speakers as *Russell Elliot, the state's newly hired broadband manager; James Bush, chairman of the Wyoming Telehealth Consortium; and Lisa Finkelstein, president of the Wyoming Medical Society board*)

January Workshop

[Nevada Broadband Workshop](#)

Date: Friday, Jan. 11, 2019
Time: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM Pacific
Location: Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701.

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

January Webinar

[BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series](#)

Topic: [Measuring the Digital Divide: Review of Recent Surveys and Data](#)

Date: Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019

Time: 2:00 PM Eastern

NTIA and the U.S. Census Bureau will present information on two large-scale consumer studies focused on computer and Internet use in America. The speakers will highlight the latest data from the surveys about who is online, who is not, how and where people access and use the Internet, what concerns they have, and more. Experts will show you how to access the data yourself, point you to open data resources, and answer questions. Learn more about the NTIA Internet Use Survey, a survey of 123,000 people in 52,000 households across the U.S. with in-depth insights on how people ages 3 and up use computers and the Internet. Then dive down to the Census block and tract level with the December 2018 release of the American Community Survey data on computer and Internet use. Our scheduled speakers include:

- Rafi Goldberg, Policy Analyst, Office of Policy Analysis and Development
- Ryan Dolan, Data Visualization Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau
- Gerson Vasquez, Data Visualization Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau

Moderator:

- Karen Archer Perry, Senior Policy Analyst, BroadbandUSA

[Click here to register](#)

Public Safety/FirstNet

- [AT&T Highlights FirstNet Subscriber Opportunity](#)
- [Washington County, MD Turns to FirstNet During Critical Incident Response](#)
- [Todd Early To Chair the Public Safety Advisory Committee \(PSAC\)](#)
- [PSAC's New Approach to Working with the FirstNet Authority and AT&T](#)

Resources

- [Tribal Broadband: Status of Deployment and Federal Funding Programs](#)
- [National Rural Electric Cooperative Association \(NRECA\) November Podcast Focuses on Co-ops Role in Digital Divide](#)
- National Digital Inclusion Alliance with Public Knowledge: [Discount Internet Guidebook](#)
- FCC Video: [Consumer Connections - 5G Wireless Services, with Commissioner Brendan Carr](#)

General News

- [Here's a State-by-State Look at the Fastest Download Speeds in the US](#)
- [The Geography of Opportunity: A POLITICO Working Group Report \(look at #6\)](#)
- CNET's "Crossing the Broadband Divide" series exploring the challenges of getting internet access to everyone: [In Farm Country, Forget Broadband. You Might Not Have Internet at All](#) and [Why Rural Areas Can't Catch a Break on Speedy Broadband](#)
- [Will a New Push for Free Wireless Internet Help Rural Students Get Online?](#)
- [Neighborly Enters Muni Broadband Market with Ambitious Accelerator Project](#)
- [How Local Legislatures are Fighting for Better Broadband Privacy](#)
- [Rural Americans are Rebooting the Spirit of the Internet](#)
- [35 Communities in 18 States Join Accelerator to Build Broadband Networks](#)
- [Penn State study finding rural broadband speeds are even slower than suspected](#)

BroadbandUSA Spotlight

Blog: NTIA Co-Hosts Summit for Carolinas' HBCUs on Enhancing Broadband Opportunities

Exemplifying the power of partnerships, NTIA recently teamed up with the [White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities \(HBCUs\)](#) and [Johnson C. Smith University](#) to convene a broadband summit for HBCUs in North and South Carolina. On Nov. 15-17, faculty and administrators from 17 of the states' combined 19 HBCUs, as well as government and industry representatives, gathered in Charlotte, N.C., for the fifth annual meeting of the [Carolinas Alliance for Success in Education \(CASE\)](#). The summit's title, "Smart HBCUs Disrupting the Digital Divide: Connecting Campuses to Communities through Broadband," reflected a focus on the technology's ability to fuel HBCUs as engines of economic growth. Former Federal Communications Commissioner Mignon Clyburn opened the summit by challenging the audience to exploit broadband connectivity to leverage the legacy of HBCUs as essential community anchors that educate students and serve their neighboring communities. [See complete blog here.](#)

Events

NTIA Events

December 13, 2018

[Rural Health Initiative, Webinar](#). Hosted by the Global Cities Team Challenge Smart Agriculture and Rural SuperCluster, which is facilitated by NTIA and NIST. (See details above.)

January 11, 2019

[Nevada Broadband Workshop 2019](#), Carson City, NV. (See details on right.)

January 16, 2019

BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series: [Measuring the Digital Divide: Review of Recent Surveys and Data](#) (See details in column on right.)

Events of Interest

December 3 - 4, 2018

[Indiana Broadband and Technology Association \(IBTA\) Conference](#), Indianapolis, IN.

December 3 - 5, 2018

[North Dakota Association of Telecommunications Cooperatives \(NDATC\) Annual Meeting](#), Bismarck, ND

December 5 - 8, 2018

[National Conference of State Legislatures \(NCSL\) Capitol Forum](#), Washington, DC.

December 6 - 8, 2018

[Council of State Governments \(CSG\) 2018 National Conference](#), Washington, DC

January 8 - 11, 2019

[International Consumer Electronics Show \(CES\)](#), Las Vegas, NV

January 11 - 16, 2019

[American Farm Bureau Annual Trade Show and Convention](#), New Orleans, LA

January 17 - 19, 2019

[National Conference of State Legislatures \(NCSL\) Executive Committee Meeting](#), New Orleans, LA

January 23 - 25, 2019

[US Conference of Mayors \(USCM\) Winter Meeting](#), Washington, DC

January 24, 2019

[American Library Association \(ALA\) Mid Winter Meeting](#) and Exhibits with Symposium on the Future of Libraries, Seattle, WA. BroadbandUSA Speaker: Karen Archer Perry.

Want to access past Practical Broadband Conversations webinars?

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



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

If you are interested in receiving technical assistance, please send an email to broadbandusa@ntia.doc.gov or call 202-482-2048. For more information, visit our website at broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov.

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January 27 - 30, 2019

[Alaska Telecom Association Winter Conference](#), Kailua-Kona, HI

January 29, 2019

[15th Annual State of the Net Conference](#), Washington, DC.

January 29 - 31, 2019

[New York State Telecommunications Association \(NYSTA\) and Telephone Association of New England \(TANE\) Issues Forum](#), Saratoga Springs, NY

February 20 – 22, 2019

[Smart and Secure Cities and Communities Challenge Expo](#), Washington, DC

Policy Corner

NTIA Releases Comments on a Proposed Approach to Protecting Consumer Privacy

NTIA released comments it received in response to a September 25, 2018, request for comment on a high-level framework for protecting consumer data privacy. NTIA received over 200 comments from individuals, industry associations, companies, civil society, and academics. Department of Commerce Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator David Redl stated that the "Administration is committed to providing real results for consumers, while giving organizations legal clarity, transparency and flexibility to innovate. We cast a wide net in asking Americans to tell us their views on privacy, and met with over 100 organizations leading up to our comment outreach." We are grateful to those who have shared their thoughts, and look forward to future engagement with stakeholders, companies, civil society and academics." [See complete comments on the NTIA Website.](#)

