Policy Corner: Broadband is More Important Than Ever
By Doug Kinkoph, Associate Administrator performing the delegated duties of the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information

Broadband is more important than ever, and NTIA has been working to expand access and increase connectivity for all Americans. We recently provided a one-year update to the American Broadband Initiative (ABI), the Trump Administration’s government-wide approach to connectivity challenges. Five new states – Nebraska, New Mexico, Michigan, Missouri, and Virginia – have joined the initial eight states participating in our National Broadband Availability Map. We have seen increased participation in our State Broadband Leader’s Network, and our BroadbandUSA website now has the most comprehensive information on state resources available. At NTIA, we have also worked with the FCC, businesses, and federal stakeholders to make sure our response to connectivity needs remains flexible. Most recently, NTIA supported Verizon’s application to the FCC for a Special Temporary Authority to access radio frequency spectrum due to increased commercial use. We plan to continue our hard work to meet the needs of the American people.

Broadband News and Updates

Federal News
- Commerce Department’s NTIA Details Its New-Found Progress in Broadband Mapping Technology
- 2020 Regional Digital Equity Summits: Partnering to Connect Students
- More Companies Take FCC Connectivity Pledge
- Schools Can Get Direct Connectivity Help From Carriers After New FCC Ruling
- USDA Final Rule; Request for Comment: Special Servicing of Telecommunications Programs Loans for Financially Distressed Borrowers
- FCC Seeks Comment on Competition in the Communications Marketplace
- FCC Proposes Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Auction Procedures
- Senate Passes Broadband DATA Act
- Senate Commerce Approves ACCESS BROADBAND Act

State News
- States Look to Improve Upon Incomplete FCC Broadband Data
- State, Local Gov Coalition Urges Fed Broadband Investment
- How States Are Expanding Broadband Access
- California: Low-Income Californians To Get Free Internet For 5 Years Under T-Mobile Merger Settlement
- Georgia: Georgia Activity Highlights Rise of Utility Company Broadband Initiatives
- Florida: Florida House Backs Broadband Expansion Effort
- Maine: Updated Broadband Action Plan Unveiled
- Massachusetts: Massachusetts Libraries Get Grant to Support Census Work
- Missouri: Only 55 Percent of Missouri Has Low-Price Internet Available
- New Hampshire: Alternatives to Municipal Bonding Discussed in Broadband Roundtable With Senator Hassan In Keene
- New York: New York State Launches Digital Services Office
- North Dakota: ‘As Essential As Roads’: How One Of America’s Most Rural States Became A Broadband Leader
- Ohio: Governor Creates BroadbandOhio to Support Expansion of High-Speed Internet
- Tennessee: Tennessee’s Work To Expand Broadband In Rural Areas Highlighted
State News, continued

• Vermont: More Than 40 Vermont Towns Consider Broadband Collaboratives
• Wisconsin: Wisconsin Offers Tax Breaks for Rural Broadband Investments

Public Safety/FirstNet

• NTIA Statement on FirstNet Board Naming Ed Parkinson as Executive Director
• AT&T Updates Firstnet Numbers, Says It Has Closed Coverage Gap With Verizon
• New FirstNet Cell Sites Launch in North Dakota to Support Public Safety
• K9s Tackle Jobs That Are Impossible For Humans And Technology; Broadband Helps Keep Them Safe And Connected
• Edward Parkinson Named Executive Director of First Responder Network Authority
• Small Town Fire Department Augments Radio Comms with FirstNet Devices
• New FirstNet Cell Site Launches in Lake Providence to Support Public Safety and Expand Connectivity in the Area; FirstNet Authority Joins Unveiling
• FirstNet Answers the Call for Tactical Dispatchers in Ohio

Digital Inclusion

• With An Election On The Horizon, Older Adults Get Help Spotting Fake News
• Rhode Island, North Dakota Work to Bridge Workforce Skills Gap
• "Online First" Census Must Navigate Digital Divide
• 2018 Digital Divide Index (DDI) Now Available
• Tackling the Tribal Digital Divide
• Report: Bridging Digital Divides Between Schools And Communities
• Broadband and Student Performance Gaps
• This Newly Designed Space Encourages Women of Color to Learn Tech Fundamentals
• San Jose Approves First Step To Connect 50,000 Unserved Residents To Broadband
• The Digital Divide: An Isolating Problem in Cleveland
• Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia: Toward Digital Inclusion Broadband Access in the Third Federal Reserve District
• Digital Prosperity: How Broadband Can Deliver Health And Equity To All Communities

General News

• NDIA: Free & Low-Cost Internet Plans
• This Startup Wants To Help Smart Cities. But They Don’t Know Where Its Data Comes From
• Best Of The West: Improving Broadband Connectivity In The Region; Tracking Wildfire With Remote Cameras; Wastewater Treatment In California’s ‘Salad Bowl’
• Why ‘Rural Broadband’ May No Longer Be An Oxymoron
• How Remote Learning Will Work In New York City
• Chattanooga Smart City Research Tops $110 Million; MIT Economist Praises Public Investment In City
• For Small County Governments, Tackling Cybersecurity Basics Can Go a Long Way
• Microsoft Airband: An Annual Update On Connecting Rural America
• Report: Two-Thirds of Counties Average Internet Speeds Slower Than Broadband
NTIA Events

April 15, 2020

BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series

Topic: Rural Broadband: Three Service Providers Discuss Business Models and Solutions

Time: 2:00 PM Eastern

Rural service providers continue to deploy broadband solutions and work to close the digital divide, developing strong local partnerships and sustainable business models. Please join BroadbandUSA for its April webinar on broadband topics of interest, which features three providers that utilize different technologies to bring broadband solutions to their rural communities. Panelists include an electric co-op from the Virginia Piedmont, an independent telephone company serving rural areas in the Southeast, and a regional cable provider, offering a triple play of video, Internet, and voice in the upper Midwest.

Speakers:

• Renee Chapline, Vice President of Communications and Government Affairs, Prince George Electric Cooperative
• James Garner, Vice President of Operations, Telephone Electronics Corporation
• Justin Forde, Senior Director of Government Relations, Midco

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 email broadbandusa@ntia.gov or call 202-482-2048. For more information, visit our website at broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov.

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