Federal, State & Tribal Newsletter

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Policy Corner: States & Broadband in 2020

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BroadbandUSA

Broadband Internet access has always been a vital part of the modern economy, but nearly every aspect of American life has been brought online since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many aspects of our jobs, health care, education, commerce, and social lives have had to take place over the Internet. State governments around the country responded quickly to the resulting strain on networks. They ramped up their creative problem-solving and increased their coordination with other states and the federal government. At NTIA, we have been a partner in these broadband efforts through our State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN), a forum for states, territories, and the District of Columbia to come together to share what works, and brainstorm new ideas to bring their citizens online. To read more about state-level efforts and the work of the SBLN, read BroadbandUSA's latest blog.

Consolidated Appropriations Act

NTIA and BroadbandUSA are analyzing the obligations under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. Please visit our website and make sure you are signed up for email updates from BroadbandUSA to receive updates.

NTIA Events

February 17, 2020

BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series
Topic: Data as the Foundation for Broadband Planning
Time: 2:00 PM Eastern
The federal government compiles huge broadband datasets cataloguing broadband availability and subscriptions through the US Census Bureau and Federal Communications Commission, among others. These can be augmented with commercially available speed test data to provide a better insight into broadband access and availability. Join BroadbandUSA on February 17, 2021 to gain a fuller understanding of these datasets and how to use data to strengthen your broadband planning efforts.

Speakers:

To be announced

Visit our Webinar Archives for past presentations, transcripts and audio recordings.

Broadband News and Updates

Federal News

- **NTIA:** More than Half of American Households Used the Internet for Health-Related Activities in 2019, NTIA Data Show
    - How Broadband Enhances Local Economies

- NTIA Pursues Innovative Spectrum Sharing Plan That Could Deliver Boost to 5G
- MBI Helps HBCUs and TCUs Navigate Distance Learning Regulations

- **FCC:** FCC Auction to Bring Broadband to Over 10 Million Rural Americans
  - Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase I Results
  - FCC Enhances Efficient Administration of the E-Rate Program
  - FCC to Host Tribal Webinar for Wireless Spectrum Licensees on January 7
- **USDA:** ReConnect continues to make award announcements
- **DOL:** Public Workforce System Role in Reopening State and Local Economies
- **FirstNet:** New FirstNet Cell Site Launches Near Columbus to Bring Expanded Coverage and Support Public Safety
  - New FirstNet Cell Sites Launch Near Kamiah and McCall, Idaho

State News

- States Prioritized Broadband as COVID-19 Took Hold
- **California:** California Lawmakers Set Sights on Bridging the Digital Divide
- **Colorado:** Colorado's New Advisory Board Starts Discussions on Expanding Broadband Access Across the State
- **Georgia:** Georgia PSC Approves Measures to Promote Broadband Investment
- **Idaho:** Idaho Broadband Access Expanded Using Federal Pandemic Funds
- **Illinois:** Gov. Pritzker and President Preckwinkle Announce New Statewide Network to Deploy Computer Devices for Low-Income Residents Across the State
- **Kansas:** Kan. Broadband Efforts Receive $85M Boost to Bridge Digital Divide
- **Maine:** Broadband Advocates Ready to Award Projects with Bond Money
- **New Hampshire:** New Hampshire Schools Confront Student Broadband Issues
- **North Carolina:** Sen. Perry Announces Deal to Fund Rural Broadband Grants
  - Governor Cooper Announces $30 million to Expand Internet Access in Rural Areas
- **South Carolina:** $121 Million Will Help Expand Broadband Internet Access in Rural SC Thanks to FCC
- **Washington:** Washington Governor Requests $400M to Address Learning Loss

Tribal News

- CARES Act Funding Goes Toward Expanding New Mexico Broadband
- FirstNet Provides Support to Tribes in COVID-19 Fight

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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