

IJA Broadband Grant Programs Public Virtual Listening Session #5
Moderator: Karen Archer Perry
February 23, 2022

Scott Woods

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Good morning and good afternoon everyone, my name is Scott woods and I am the director of the office of minority broadband initiatives here at NTIA his office of Internet connectivity and growth. It is my pleasure to welcome you to our fifth session of the IJA broadband programs public virtual listening series. Before we get started let's quickly review some key housekeeping items, first, the presentation, along with a transcript and recording of today's session will be available on the Robin USA website within seven days under the events slash past events tab.

Second, if at any time you experience technical difficulties with our zoom platform, please use the chat function to send a message to our host and we will address your issues. So let's get started. Today we're excited to have you join us to provide input and feedback on our Digital Equity Act Programs. Our collaboration and your input will be key factors in the success of this program, and we will open the microphone to hear from as many attendee participants, as we can today as we've done in past events. Your constructive feedback is critical to our next steps of designing and implementing this key program, however, given our time constraints, it may not be possible to hear from everyone who would like to speak. If we do not get to you or, if you prefer to provide written comments, please feel free to provide your input on the discussion questions today. By submitting them by the chat box or by emailing them to broadbandforall@ntia.gov and anytime again at broadbandforall@ntia.gov at anytime. With that let's go over today's agenda. First, we will provide a detailed overview of the Digital Equity Program and today's question from two of my colleagues in the Office of Policy Analysis and Development. Number one Russ Hanser the Director of Communications Policy Initiatives and two Rafi Goldberg the Senior Telecommunications Policy Specialist. After you hear from them, I will provide the listening session logistics before opening up the listening session, which will be moderated by one of my team members Karen Archer Perry, a Senior Broadband Program Specialist here at the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth. And with that said let's get started, please join me in welcoming Russ Hanser and Rafi Goldberg.

Russ Hanser

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Thank you so much Scott and thank you everyone else for having me here to speak about the Digital Equity Act Programs, along with my colleague Rafi Goldberg. So these are the questions that you'll all be discussing during the listening session, following the presentation. We're going to skip by these for now, but there'll be an opportunity to look at them in more depth later on. I'll

be talking about the Digital Equity Act of 2021 and some high-level issues with respect to its programs, as you all know, many of you know, the act to find digital equity as the condition in which individuals and communities have the information technology capacity that is needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States and digital inclusion is defined a little bit more broadly, to refer to activities that are necessary to ensure that all individuals in the US have access to and use of affordable, information and communication technologies, including access to broadband service devices with which use the service access to applications and so on, and digital inclusion includes obtaining access to digital literacy training the provision of technical support and obtaining basic awareness of measures to ensure online privacy and cybersecurity so quite broad here. The Digital Equity Act creates three sequence programs to promote digital inclusion. So, collectively, these are \$2.75 billion worth of programs and their overall objective is to support the closure of the digital divide and promote equity and digital inclusion, such that individuals and communities have information technology capacity needed for full participation in the society and economy of the United States.

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The first two programs are really two halves of one whole program implemented by the state's those are the State Planning Grant Program for \$60 million, and then the State Capacity Grant Program which is about 1.44 billion exactly \$1.4 billion, and then we have the competitive program a little bit later on that's going to be a competitive grant program which will, which will distribute about \$1.25 billion dollars, that will be created, once the state implementation grants begin getting awarded so a little bit down the road from here. So first an overview of the funding pool the program types in the objectives. First, we have the State Digital Equity Planning Program. That is a funding pool of \$60 million it's a state and territory formula grant program. And the objective, there is to promote achievement of digital equity support digital inclusion activities and build capacity for efforts by states for the option of broadband my residents of those States this is the first phase of the State programs. And it's sort of the state's opportunity to create the plan by which is going to effectuate the second phase, and that is the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program so that's where we come into the \$1.44 billion. That also a state and territory formula program the same formula applied to different amounts of money in the same provision of the Act and the objective, there is to support again implementation of the state digital equity plans and digital inclusion activities. Although these monies are set to go to states there's a set aside for Indian tribes, Alaska native entities, native Hawaiian organizations, and then another set aside for US Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Marianas and any other territory or possession, that is not the state so although territories are not included in the sort of the main definition of States with respect to these programs, they are included in these set asides, and can get money to pursue these activities that way. I mentioned the breadth of the definitions out also broad categories of individuals that the Digital Equity Act is aimed at helping. The programs in priorities of the individuals living in low income households earning at or below 150% of the poverty level. Individuals

who are members of racial or ethnic minority groups individuals in rural areas, individual facing language barriers, the aging, individuals with disabilities, incarcerated individuals, and veterans, these are not rankings, this is just the age groups that are that are accounted for by the digital equity act and that need to be accounted for it's a plans and state programs. So, as I mentioned the two state programs are really have a whole. There are two distinct streams and it's really important we always want to emphasize, you have to complete state has to complete the first phase, the State Digital Equity Planning Program in order to get money under the capacity program, which is that 1.44 billion so need to participate in the first phase so first thing that will happen is a NOFO will be released a little bit later this year on this program.

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Next thing that will happen is the eligible entities will decide if they want to participate and, if so, will need to submit an application. You'll hear a little bit more about that later why NTIA will review the applications and then the eligible entities will work on developing plans, using the money that they get using the guide from the program. Then again, for entities that have completed that part of the program we've got the capacity grant program there'll be a separate NOFO notice of funding opportunity to shoot with respect to the Capacity Grant Program. That will be a little bit later on, then they'll be applications filed by eligible entities, who had completed the Planning Grant Program and NTIA again we'll review and approve applications for how to use want to use the state, the state capacity of money. And the money is awarded annually over five years, based on each year's appropriation and then the last stage eligible entities these use the money themselves or subtract the money to interviews that are listed in the Statute and you'll feel a bit more about and pursue essentially the digital equity plans that they've created during the first phase of the of the process. So eligible costs the state programs you've got again the two pieces so during the planning phase of the process grants can only be used for a couple of purposes they can be used to develop the State Digital Equity Plan or to award sub grants to other entities listed in the Statute to assist in the development of the State Equity Plan Digital Activity Plan so again first phase fully focused on developing that plan, and then the second phase is aimed at implementing that plan so funds awarded into that program can still only be used for limited purposes, but there are less limited so there's somebody that can be used update or maintain the Digital Equity Plan. Money generally is going to be used, implement the plan again the eligible entity typically a state kind of award sub grants to entity is listed in the Statute. To assistant implementing the plan, to pursue digital inclusion activities, to report back to the state on success, or the progress of the digital inclusion activities. There's also somebody that can be used to determine the efficacy of those above efforts so states and of course correct over time, that certain efforts are not successful and then to cover certain administrative costs in carrying out these programs we recognize Statue recognizes I should say that. states are going to incur administrative costs, just like we do here at NTIA, but thank you again for having me take care.

Rafi Goldberg

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Thank you Russ so, how does the state participate in the Digital Equity Programs well, the first step is that the governor or the equivalent official in each state needs to select and administering entity to develop the state's digital equity plan and ultimately to administer the capacity grants that will be used to implement that plan the Statute lays out a range of different entities that may be selected. It includes the State itself certain state agencies tribal governments community anchor institutions certain number of nonprofits foundations and others, you can find on the list on the left side of the slide. When selecting and administering an entity, it will be important to keep in mind the responsibilities that you will need to undertake, on behalf of the state. We've listed those on the right side of the slide the administering entity, will receive and administer grant awards, develop and implement the state digital equity plan make sub grants as needed and generally serve as an advocate for digital equity in the state. Speaking of responsibilities state should also bear in mind the assurances, you will have to make when applying for grants under this program. That includes using grant funds and in a fashion that is consistent with the Statute and then any applicable regulations correcting deficiencies that if they do happen and cooperating in a future program evaluation effort's by NTIA. Among other things, the administering entity, will need to use proper accounting and fiscal control procedures maintain good records and make any changes to the Digital Equity Plan available for public comments and finally before submitting the State Digital Equity Plan for approval by the system Secretary. The state will need to ensure that it has complied with all the relevant requirements, importantly, that includes engaging with a range of community groups and other stakeholders and accepting and responding to public comment on draft at State Digital Equity Plans. But, with all that in mind let's talk about how state actually implies for the initial planning grant. Interested states will need to submit an application within 60 days of when the NTIA publishes the NOFO or notice the funding opportunity. The Statute specifies, just a few things that need to be included with the application states will need to name and described the selected administrative entity. They will need to certify that they will develop and submit a State Digital Equity Plan that meets all of the requirements within a year of receiving the funds. And they will need to make all the assurances that were outlined in the previous slide. And, just a quick note that, generally speaking, states will be expected to extend their planning grant funds within one year of receiving them. Though there is an option for the system Secretary to extend that deadline, the importantly, not the deadline to actually submit the plan just the deadline to expend the funds. So once states receive their planning grants, they need to begin developing their State Digital Equity Plans. The Statute outlines several different buckets of requirements for what needs to be in those plans. First states will have to identify the barriers to digital equity that are faced by the members of covered population, and so in their state. That includes each of the different groups that Russ outline to a little bit earlier. Second the plan should specify measurable objectives for documenting and promoting and host of digital equity related goals each category of current population. That includes not just basic broadband adoption, but also digital

skills development making public services more accessible online. Making affordable computing devices available with appropriate technical support and even promoting privacy and cyber security awareness. Each plan should also include an assessment of how the digital equity goals are going to interact with other state plans such as workforce development and educational outcome plans. The State digital equity plan also needs to describe how the state plans to continue to collaborate with a range of stakeholders in implementation. And you'll see here a pretty long list of examples that's been pulled from the Statute. This collaboration and inclusion is really a recurring theme of the digital equity act so it will be important to engage with a wide range of community groups local and tribal governments nonprofits civil rights organizations many others.

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And finally, and in keeping with that same sort of theme States will need to include in each plan a list of organizations with which the administering entity and collaborating during development plan in collaboration and engagement with these groups needs to happen, both during development of the digital equity plan. In there needs to be a plan to continue that engagement when the plan is being get implemented. So as mentioned earlier, the digital equity program is set up to allow stage once the state has an improved stages equity plan will become eligible to apply for capacity and grant funds to actually implement the plan. And these funds will be available on an annual basis, there is an appropriation for each of the next several fiscal years and as you will see distribution of the past experience needs to begin, no later than two years after the beginning of when planning grants get awarded so it will be important to finish the State Federal Equity Plan on time, not just to satisfy the requirements of that grant but also to become eligible. To start applying for capacity grant funds, the capacity grants can be used both for implementation and otherwise, to support digital social activities in those States. And the application will also be something that's required within 60 days of a notice of funding opportunity being released. And again, that application, similar to the planning grant application needs to include a description of the administered entity for each State Digital Equity Plan itself a certification, that the state is going to implement the digital equity plan grants in a manner that is consistent with its goals. The required assurances that previously mentioned, and if the State chooses to amended social equity plan it's going to need to list out what is change there as well.

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So how's the money distributed? The Statute specifies of a funding formula to be used, both for the planning brands and for the capacity grants what is outlined in the Statute is that 50% of the awards who each eligible state simply based on the population of that eligible state in proportion to the total population of all the eligible and by eligible states, I mean the ones that successfully applied for the grand so they become eligible to receive the funding in other 25% of the total grant is based on the number of

Individuals in each state who are members of the afore mentioned covered populations and that's again in proportion to the total number of people in all of the eligible state board members are covered populations. And then, finally, the last 25% of the total grant based on the relative lack of availability and adoption and broadband in the eligible State in proportion to the lack of availability and adoption among all of the eligible and the Statute specify is a few different data sources that we will be required to use in making that determination, including the NTIA Internet new survey the American Community Survey and the FCC is a front end deployment reports. An important note the amount awarded to any eligible state during a particular year cannot be less than half of a percent of the total amount made available to all of the states in that year. There is a floor in terms of the minimum amount of money that each State can receive and we will include more information on how the funding formula will be implemented in the notice of funding opportunity. Almost everything that we've discussed so far has been about the Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program, but we do very quickly just once you give a brief overview of the Competitive Grant Program, which is a little bit to further down the road in terms of how the rollout of its being stage. Unlike the capacity grants and, like the planning grand this is as the name implies not formula based but a competitive grants and it's not just States that are eligible to apply for these grants political subdivisions, you know, such as the city or county or other municipality tribal organizations, nonprofits, community anchor institutions, educational and you know agencies, all of the entities listed on the right will be eligible to apply for these grants which you know, are also designed to promote digital inclusion and equity, rather than being based on the state's digital equity plan and sort of how the state is rolling that out, it will be open to a wider range of entities to compete for and that and that will start a little bit later on, once the capacity grants had been awarded and with that I'm going to turn it back over to Scott once.

Scott Woods

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Thank you very much for Russ and Rafi now, we will start the part of the program that everyone has been waiting for that's our listening session. Before we get started, I'll go over a few logistics and then we'll get right into it to provide verbal comments on the questions we present it. Please see the instructions on your screen, if you are joining us from your computer or on the zoom mobile app please use the raise-your-hand feature to indicate you would like to speak. If you had joined via phone audio only, please be sure to dial *9 to raise your hand. When your name is called, your mic will be unmuted and you will have the opportunity to speak Please, please began by providing your name and the organization that you represent. Please note we will limit comments to two minutes each, so please keep your comments brief to allow time for others to participate. During your two-minute window, you may respond to one or more of the discussion questions presented on the screen. As a reminder, you may also provide comments regarding today's discussion questions you can do that by submitting them via the chat box or emailing them again directly to broadbandforall@ntia.gov. Finally, please remember

that this time is for you to provide feedback on the discussion questions presented today. If you have a specific question about Digital Equity Act program or any of the other broadband programs authorized under the bipartisan infrastructure bill, please send those directly to broadbandforall@ntia.gov or you may submit them via the chat function to our host today. With that, please welcome Karen Archer Perry who will moderate today's listening session. Karen, over to you.

Karen Perry

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Thank you very much, let me have the questions, please.

We have four questions to focus our conversation on today, and I want to make sure that you know where we want to focus the conversation.

The first question is: What are the most effective digital inclusion, equity, and adoption interventions that states should include in their digital equity plans? So again, what are the most effective digital inclusion, equity, and adoption interventions that states should include in their digital equity plans?

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The second question is: What types of assistance should NTIA provide to states, localities, and community groups, and underrepresented populations to ensure that State Digital Equity Plans and states use of Capacity Grants fully address the equity gaps in broadband access, adoption, and use, and promote digital skills?

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Now the third question relates to another one of our major grant programs, that's the BEAD program. The BEAD program is the Broadband Equity Access Deployment grant program you might have heard about that grant program at one of our earlier webinars. The Broadband Equity Access Deployment Grant Program is the \$42.5 billion grant program that is a formula based grant program that will go to the states in order to address access grants in unserved and underserved areas of the country so it's a grant program that will be distributed to states on a formula basis to address access grant access gaps across the country, but it also does include a component, not just for access but for adoption so with that as a background, let me now read the question number three: NTIA believes that it is crucial for states BEAD proposals to be as integrated as possible with their digital equity plans and that the two work in tandem. How should NTIA ensure that the State Digital Equity Plans and the states' BEAD program plans are integrated to address broadband access and adoption? So how do we make sure that the access plans and the equity plans are integrated and that we get the most out of we help the states get the most out of both?

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And then the fourth question is: What adoption what best practices, if any, should States follow in developing measurable objectives for availability, affordability, accessibility, digital literacy, privacy and cyber security?

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So you've got an awful lot of options in terms of where you can provide comments so as Scott mentioned we're asking you to raise your hand. Please press star six on your phone when you are ready to speak, I will call on one person to indicate who's on deck meeting who's going to come after that person. We're asking you to keep your comments to one or two minutes, because I think we're going to have a lot of commenters. Introduce yourself and indicate your organizational name and we are really looking forward to hearing from you. I've got a couple of names teed up already it looks like Nicole Umayam from Arizona state library is first and I think Judy Mortrude is second.

Nicole Umayam

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Well, good afternoon, my name is Nicole Umayam and I am the digital inclusion library consultant at the Arizona state library archives and public records a division of the Arizona Secretary of State. I've just celebrated my fifth year with the state library and each day I witness how libraries support broadband access, adoption, and use and support digital skills training. Library leaders are engaged in broadband planning and our position to partner with other entities to extend resources. So we need local and state coordinators who are dedicated to amplifying the work of those on the ground building trust and relationships among those organizations and crafting a shared vision of local success. After unserved and underserved areas, the BEAD Program prioritizes serving community anchor institutions with service falling below one gigabyte speed symmetrical. In Arizona, this is approximately one third of rural and tribal libraries. At the state library we collect data on library broadband through self-reported annual statistics, voluntary speed tests, applications, and during site visits hardly consistent. NTIA may assist state efforts by supporting comprehensive broadband mapping methodologies of anchor institutions by providing guidance for collecting pricing information and comparing available speeds versus actual speeds and by supporting initiatives that facilitate data exchange between schools, libraries and other anchors. We need smart long term investments in library broadband and fewer band aid solutions. I've heard from libraries, who are tired of applying for grant funds for temporary interventions such as wi-fi hotspot lending or for testing out innovative technologies for network resilience, such as low earth orbit satellites and TV white space. Between the administrative cost of applying for grants and the constraint of offering a service for one year or less, and the ever shrinking budgets that forced libraries to lose the staff to manage these programs many libraries are not in the position to take advantage of these funds. Libraries are critical infrastructure and digital equity plans need to acknowledge and strategize around supporting the library workforce to build success. Thanks.

Karen Perry

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Thank you very much, Nicole Judy you're next, and I think H. Buddy Robinson, you're on deck right after Judy.

Judy Mortrude

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Thank you, Karen. Good afternoon I am Judy Mortrude from World Education and the current President of the National Coalition for Literacy. A national team of adult education organizations that advocated for the Digital Equity Act. We are thrilled to have this equity investment as a compliment to the larger broadband infrastructure funding. The equity inside the Digital Equity Act is its complete focus on covered household and covered populations and planning template needs to make that focus crystal clear and defined that the key role of an administering entity is to bring identified stakeholders to the planning process. In every state there are public systems that represent providers and constituents that DEA is intended to serve these systems can bring not only expertise in covered populations, but also examples of current digital equity initiatives that can be invested in and scaled through DEA. NTIA guidance should mandate, the inclusion of public systems serving covered populations through community anchor institutions in the core DEA planning leadership, including covered household or low income serving systems like Canna, Snappy, and Tea, and Hud language barrier serving systems, including a workforce, innovation and opportunity act or WEOWA a title to adult education which serves English language learners and people were foundational skill needs and incarcerated individuals serving systems, including State Department of Corrections. Building digital skills is a vital aspect of digital equity a landscape scan completed by the ED Tech Center at world education confirm that access to the Internet and devices, is not sufficient for digital equity. The scan identified a common misunderstanding a belief that digital skill development happens by purchasing software or a tool. The reality is that digital literacy and skill development works best with explicit instruction to help people use technology to accomplish their goals and is not tied to a specific tool and NTIA should guard against states buying solutions where DEA funds in which companies selling products and services a lasting digital equity solution will come from communities and the embedded systems that serve them. In terms of strategies digital navigator programs have proven effective as they train staff and volunteers across community anchor institutions to provide just in time individualized support for accessing devices. Internet and relevant digital literacy training with flexible options to participate. Finally, as for evaluation accountability state plans should define measurable objectives for digital skill gain and these accountability measures need to be carefully crafted to drive intended practice. These measures should also be embedded in those public serving systems that are serving the covered populations in order to scale and sustained digital skill development. NTIA should facilitate a national working group of practitioners, who have developed digital skill measures to help establish common ground, thank you for your consideration.

Karen Perry

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Thank you, Judy. Buddy you're next and then after Buddy it's Paul Gee and I'm going to put in one reassurance Buddy before you speak and the reassurance is to let everybody know that the slides for this presentation will be available about a week from today on our website along with a video of this presentation

and a transcript and so if you would like a copy of the slides you will have to wait a week, but they will be available on our website. Buddy take it away tell us who you are.

Lauren Long

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Hi this is Lauren long. I'm currently with Buddy Robinson, we are representing Value Concepts Incorporated, VCI, located in Lawrenceville, Georgia. I'm a grant coordinator and project manager. So first of all, thank you for helping secure funding for fixed wireless broadband systems for rural underserved and unserved communities of America. In order to effectively take steps to diminish the digital divide. We need to take into consideration all of the resources we can utilize. According to Emily A Vogel's a resource of research associate focusing on Internet and technology at Pew research Center with fewer options for online access at their disposal Americans with lower incomes are relying more on smartphones. As of early 2021, 27% of adults living in households earning less than \$30,000 a year our smartphone only Internet users, meaning they own a smartphone, but they do not have broadband. In addition, for example, in April 2020, 59% of parents with lower incomes who had children in schools that were remote due to the pandemic said their children would likely face at least one of three digital obstacles to their schooling; such as a lack of reliable Internet at home, no computer at home, or needing to use a smartphone to complete schoolwork. The BEAD grant addresses the need for broadband Internet access however, it needs to address the need for cellular coverage as well. This means that while yes, providing broadband internet is crucial in order to fully acknowledge the limiting factors of the digital divide. We need to take into consideration all of the technology devices that one should have access to including cell phones. To elaborate, these same rural unserved and underserved communities have many telecommunications cell tower cellular dead zones. Due to these telecommunication dead zones citizens cannot use their wireless devices to make 911 calls in case of an emergency and also emergency first responders such as police departments, fire departments, and emergency management are unable to utilize telecommunication services in these dead zones. In addition to this digital divide is not only pertaining to Internet service in the home, but it also pertains the use of cellular devices out of the home. There are a large number of individuals and rural and underserved communities that spend their days outside of the home and having access to cellular coverage and data outside of the home, would be a productive first step and addressing the digital divide in our underserved uncertain rural communities. Therefore, in designing fixed wireless infrastructure that is funded the tower infrastructure for fixed wireless installations should be strategically designed to cover these dead zones for wireless device connectivity. With this strategy, we can kill two birds with one stone, we can provide fixed wireless of these communities, and we can provide cellular service for the dead zones, all with the infrastructure of a cell tower. The cell towers can accommodate.

Karen Perry

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I want to remind. I want to, would you wrap it up, and I want to remind everybody that you can also send your written comments to broadbandforall@ntia.gov and I have a I have a sense that we've got some really good written comments coming in, after you guys are done with this, so please.

Lauren Long

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Give me last couple comments all right I'm almost done. Funding for the impaired on these cell towers can accommodate fixed wireless Internet service, cell coverage, and public safety radio connectivity. Funding for this is imperative for connectivity nationwide and I strongly urge you to consider investing this funding to the construction installation of cell towers, so that we can proactively put an end to the digital divide. And last but not least, in order to productively execute this plan, the states also need to release mapping of cellular coverage dead zones and underserved and rural communities, so we can follow the FCC mapping guidelines.

Karen Perry

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Okay, I do encourage everybody to remember that we you're welcome to send comments directly relevant to the questions that we have here to broadbandforall@ntia.gov. We do continue to welcome your feedback we're definitely focusing on these questions and we do want you to keep your comments to one to two minutes. So that was the speaker for HB Robinson Lauren did you say your name was. Yes, Lauren. Thank you our next speaker is Paul Gee and after Paul we have Shelly Wright.

Paul Gee

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My name is not Paul, my name is Patrick and I was just thinking. Well I'm Paul I'm Paul Gee right now I can speak. Okay, great no worries so listen, let me just comment to Lauren because we really do have to have some sanity when we talk about this process of getting broadband to everyone. It is very important that we serve everyone. It is very important that we serve them with high quality broadband. So when Lauren is saying that fixed wireless is a good strategy for doing that she's not actually looking at the evidence that's already in the SEC record on this very issue. There are 27 volumes of evidence 11,000 pages that will show everyone that if you did such as a strategy, a fixed wireless you would kill, much more than just two metaphorical birds with these wire, the stones you'd be killing many, many actual birds and insects and unfortunately people by believing that wireless broadband and wired broadband are quote "functionally equivalent services" end quote as stated in the 1996 telecommunications act. That is not true, the telecommunications act only is for telecommunications service. It has nothing to do with broadband or wireless broadband wireless broadband is completely unnecessary and hazardous and it is not a good way for digital equity. What you want to do is actually go back and say in question four we have a fill in the blank ability list. You see many abilities there but you're missing a key term called accountability. One key best practice is to learn from our broadband history from the 1990s, to the present, that's 30 years, and make the parties responsible for creating the

digital divide fully accountable. No taxpayer supported entity should be getting a pass for the fully documented sins that created the digital divide in the first place, that means that the money was misused and we did not get our contracted for 45 megabits up and 45 megabits down that was in the contract to go to everyone, they were supposed to replace our copper with that fiber for that purpose, you know how much money \$500 million. I appreciate going back and getting the \$500 billion back from those companies it dwarfs your \$42 billion, thank you.

Karen Perry

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Thank you, Paul now we have Patrick Messac or Shelley next.

Patrick Messac

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Hi, thank you. My name is Patrick Messick and I'm the project director for Oakland Undivided, a collective impact equity-based initiative attempting to bring broadband to our 36,000 unconnected households and the 94,000 residents without a device Internet or both. I want to thank you for creating this opportunity to provide some feedback and I'd like to just offer some insights briefly into number one the most effective digital inclusion strategies. We have found here that we are deemed a served area, despite you know 10s of thousands of folks without broadband. This is going to keep Oakland and many urban areas across the country from accessing the lion's share of BEAD funding and so DEA is probably our best opportunity to bring more connectivity to urban areas, where the majority of the digital divide resides. I want to uplift two strategies that we deem as critical to our efforts, the first is: What is commonly referred to as digital navigators we call them broadband adoption hubs here in Oakland but I don't know if anyone on this call has tried to navigate the application for the affordable connectivity plan. But it is laborious, to say the least, and our families are going to need a lot of support through trusted institutions to navigate that enrollment process. Our nonprofits and our Community based organizations, the trusted folks in our community that can help get family signed up for this long term benefit are taxed from providing so many critical services throughout the pandemic and desperately need funds if they're going to be responsible for helping to enroll folks in this benefit, so I hope that DEA specifically NTIA makes clear that adoption centers are designated for this money, we also believe that many of our unconnected are currently residing in multiple dwelling units. Many of the folks who will not be able to apply because of their mixed citizenship status for the ACP reside in these buildings and we believe that we need to create an accessible free apartment wi-fi. We hope that the NTIA makes clear that bringing broadband to multiple dwelling units should be a priority and make clear that these are eligible uses of funds thanks for this opportunity to speak, and I look forward to continued collaboration.

Karen Perry

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And thank you very much. Carole I have to ask you if you'll tell me who's next. We have PA Tibbs coming up and then after we have Shelly Wright.

Phillip Tibbs

00:46:50.370 --> 00:46:58.650

Yes, good morning. Good afternoon, Ms. Perry thank you very much appreciated. My name is Philip A. Tibbs I represent the firm of Broadband Bridge TIS Group JV. We're very interested in how number three the NTIA plans for the BEAD proposed rules and there was bridging the broadband equity and access development grants from a perspective of not only the states, but federal cabinet level agencies that may be able to be utilized in those deployments and us as a small business and actually cooperation with larger ISP co-op corporations nationwide and to look towards those particular opportunities. We're very interested in trying to see how the aspects of digital discrimination can be eliminated and very much the desert digital literacy. One of the other earlier persons had mentioned about the affordability access plan and we have already investigated into that as a possibility of then seeing where the \$30 internet reduction from the ISP is actually there. It is yes it's complicated, but it has to be done and also it's wanted to billing cycles before it's even projected even be equitable and available to actually the citizens ever apply for it, but if you don't have Internet or the access to it it's very difficult to go from there. So we encourage that this would be able to be done as soon as possible, and we, as a as a corporation in the earlier slides, we will be one of the persons applying for these. Thank you very much appreciated, and you see that I've got myself to then 30 seconds well okay 120 seconds.

Karen Perry

00:48:42.630 --> 00:48:46.860

Thank you very much. And is it Shelly next? That was Phillip so then Benny on deck.

00:49:32.100 --> 00:49:39.600

Carole Garner- producer: And Phillip is up next after Shelley and then we have - Benny Lee.

Benny Lee

00:50:33.660 --> 00:50:43.800

Okay, great my name is Benny Lee. I head up the San Mateo County public wi-fi program and I'm speaking on local governments and non-subscription public wi-fi program. As you know, you know when the pandemic hit the state of California, had it had 160,000 student dropout which was 2.6% of the Population. We saw this happening in San Mateo county in the most underserved areas were dropout rates during the first two months was between 5% to 10% of the student population. So rescuing the students was very critical when we built out the public wi-fi program and I'll just tell you in the last six months, we saw 100,000 devices connecting enabled schools to rescue kids, including providing student counseling reversing the trend. And it also enabled underserved families to leverage the public wi-fi to find jobs, work remotely, and do zoom type health checkups and many other functions. It also enabled underserved families who had no connectivity access to government services such as food services, rental services, and unemployment as many the offices were closed during the pandemic. Now I spoke in a previous webinar before, subscription services is what seems to be the focus

and we need to focus on subscription which includes public wi-fi where local governments can actually look at the most underserved areas. Because this will help increase adoption through this model through ubiquitous access through non-subscription we've done it we proved that we have the numbers. Also, I mentioned that you know my prior role as a council member in the city of San Leandro through public private partnerships, through the subscription services we worked with a builder to provide strands. Basic grants 10% of the strands so that we can cover public services and I heard Oakland I know that they did wonderful you know 1100 Wireless access points which gets over 200,000 connections, a day the these are services that local governments do and it's important for us to make sure that it's not just about subscription services is also about non subscription services which local governments can help bridge that gap for adoption of these technologies, thank you.

Karen Perry

00:52:56.340 --> 00:53:10.620

Thank you. Thank you, Benny. I wanted to call on Tom Karst next and then next Sachin Gupta and please correct my pronunciation when you come up Tom.

Tom Karst

00:53:11.670 --> 00:53:19.200

Thank you. I'm Tom Karst with Century Tech. We're a social impact organization focused on leveraging the intersections between broadband technology, housing, and opportunity to meaningfully advanced the lives of these historically currently marginalized. I wanted to talk about questions, one and four and kind of how they intersect today with looking at how we should measure the objectives for this program. I think, in addition to those traditional metrics we should expand it to the broader opportunities that this kind of activity could present. Broadband is more than just getting online. It's about health, it's about education, it's about employment, it's about future, it's about access to services. So if we intentionally start with those metrics and use those as a guideline to then look into our traditional availability affordability, accessibility we can better understand, not just who's getting connected, but how lives are changing with all of this. And that feeds into the best practices of making digital inclusion interventions powerful. One of the pieces we've heard already about is access to services. If we can link access to government and community services through these plans we can digitize and deliver resident services that people may not be aware of, or may not have access to, or may struggle filling out the complexity of the forms and bringing all that, together, and then bringing it back to the measurements, we can really amplify the impact that these programs have on people's lives, thank you.

Karen Perry

00:54:59.850 --> 00:55:01.650

Karen Perry: Thank you very much. Sachin Gupta and then I think Shelly is ready, after you.

Sachin Gupta

00:55:09.390 --> 00:55:10.260

Can you guys hear me? Thank you, Karen for giving me an opportunity to speak. My name is Sachin Gupta. I am with Central and Fiber of Oklahoma and we are based out of Stillwater Oklahoma. I would like to tackle question

number two and question number three off your list, and then I also have a comment about your Competitive Grant Program as well as a comment about the program as a whole. So states in their Digital Equity Programs, they should prioritize low income neighborhoods and they should prioritize small communities like cities which have populations less than 20,000 and they have poverty levels over 50%. If they prioritize these small communities and low-income neighborhoods they can be more equitable with their Digital Equity Program. Further, and I would reiterate Patrick from Oakland commented over we here, if the states create broadband adoption hubs and broadband adoption spots within these small communities, it would really allow these small communities to take use of programs like ACP, which is a great program but the signup process for that ACP program is extremely onerous. It is extremely difficult for ISPs such as us to sign up people and it is difficult enough for people who want to sign up for ACP to go through that. So creation of broadband adoption hub in these small communities would help a lot. For the Competitive Grant Program, my comment is this: on your slide, you said that NTIA may approve additional eligible entities, and I would recommend that one of these eligible entities is minority owned businesses, most of the iniquity lies that minorities and minority owned businesses are the ones that are providing services to the minorities, so they will be best placed to use these funds to hopefully get rid of some of these inequalities. And then my final comment is about the act as a whole, on your slide, you said that 50% of the funds would be distributed as per the population of the state. What that means is that, even though the application has equity in its name it heavily favors equality, rather than equity in a state like Oklahoma which has 47% of its population that is unserved. One in four children do not have access to Internet, to be able to engage in distance learning. We will always get less money than rich states like California or Texas, even though our needs are greater than their needs, thank you very much.

Karen Perry

00:58:35.610 --> 00:58:54.630

Karen Perry: And thank you very much. I think shelly is ready to come back online, and I think we have another name I've been having problems with Antwuan Wallace and you're going to have to correct me on my pronunciation when you come online so Shelley next and then Antwaun after that.

Shelley Wright

00:58:55.530 --> 00:59:02.850

Thank you so much for letting me speak. I'm my name is Shelley Wright and I'm the director of Canadian Educators for Safe Technology. We need quality superior fiber optics to the premises that's FTTP in our communities, big or small FTTP will provide the most effective digital inclusion and equity. Electromagnetic disabled people have been injured and displaced by indiscriminate pervasive wireless signals in their communities from cell towers. I have worked with children and teachers in schools, who are injured by wireless signals in schools. I also know of a growing number of people who are becoming sick around 24-7 wireless signals. They are experiencing what physicians call microwave sickness. We need funds allocated to support electromagnetic disabled people who need wired only technology in public

places, so we can access essential services. Fiber optics to the premises to every home and business will provide superior, fast, more consistent, and energy efficient signals. Cell towers injure and displace electromagnetic disabled. For two decades, our accommodations and integration needs have been ignored and options for housing, employment, and transportation have been severely restricted. We would like key players to share our concerns loudly, widely, and consistently to reach policymakers, urban developers, and everyone so they can create accessible public spaces which integrate the needs of electromagnetic disabilities, disabled people, so they can work and access essential services. Wired technology supports these disabled people, we need wired hospitals, wired workplaces, wired grocery stores, wired community centers, and wired communities. We need Digital Equity Funds allocated appropriately for FTTP fiber to the premises to support electrosensitive disabled people in their communities and workplaces Thank you so much for this opportunity Karen to speak.

Karen Perry

01:01:12.000 --> 01:01:12.570

Thank you. I'm Antwane would you help me with your name and tell me where you're from.

Antwuan Wallace

01:01:23.310 --> 01:01:31.440

Great it's Antwaun Wallace and I'm calling, in part, as the CEO of National Innovation Service, where we do both racial equity work and co-design with communities, based on community participatory research. I just want to insert to this conversation justice to the questions of one, three and four and moving us past best practices into efficacious practice for interventions. I think what we've been able to do in other places around supporting what we know about early childhood education and establishing benchmarks that are based on efficacious data are also available for us to think about bringing people online, and that leads me into metric frameworks. As we think about much of this work, seems to pit equity against global competitiveness and lacks the ability to really think about the capabilities of innovation in this space and particularly when we think about the demography, or the demographics that were laid out earlier. I think there is a need to substantiate lived experience as subject matter, expertise and the epistemologies there and the way in which knowledge is created, and then informs these words, this is particularly, I think, important for the BEAD proposals as we think about disproportionate impacts and folks with lived experience and it allows us to attend to some of the most structural gaps and we haven't talked about the structural gaps in terms of who's online who's not online and deal with some of the sub-group disadvantages that are historical gender braced placed in class. I think the more explicit that we are about those questions, the more animated the questions of equity might be in terms of being a substantial part of this portfolio, thank you.

Karen Perry

01:03:33.120 --> 01:03:33.720

Thank you. I'd like to we have Nancy Van Dover next, and then we have Robert Toporek next on deck and Nancy are you available

Nancy Van Dover 01:04:01.680 --> 01:04:03.540
Yes, can you hear me now. Oh, thank you very much. I'm an EMF disabled person and I represent at least the 6% of the population that are MS disabled. it's a fast growing population and because of the deployment of the wireless everywhere and I'm part of a number of groups so that represents the EMF disabled and also safe technology organizations in our country, I don't know of any other population and who is more affected by the access to the Internet and whether or not it is wired or wireless, then the MS disabled.

Karen Perry 01:04:51.600 --> 01:04:53.490
And can you help me and can you tell me what EMS disabled means?

Nancy Van Dover 01:04:55.890 --> 01:05:02.820
Your mouth yeah and, unfortunately, that this is the case, many people don't know what it is it's electromagnetically sensitive.

Karen Perry 01:05:03.420 --> 01:05:04.320
Okay, thank you.

Nancy Van Dover 01:05:04.590 --> 01:05:16.200
And we can be actually severely killed and injured by wireless of I am actually two years now and EMF prisoner in my home. I cannot go outside of my home and not only do I have ADA and for housing act rights are being violated, but yeah, I am, like many other EMS disabled. We have no public access, even though we have a lot of laws that give us that we don't because there no accommodations for us, and I would like to see that this can be changed, at least in part by this infrastructure act and how this can be done. The only way it can be done is by fiber to the premises if we're going to be able to have digital inclusion. If we're going to be able to have digital equity and it's extremely important for the EMS disabled because many of us are just shut into our homes, and the only way that we can have education, the only way we can work, the only way we can get access to our government, the only way I have is telemedicine. So having safe internet to my home is extremely important and if I didn't own my home and was able to shield it, I would not have a place to live. There are millions of EMS refugees around the world being pushed out of their homes because of wireless radiation and so that's why I say that the only safe way to actually give this Internet is through fiber to the premises. It's also future proof that its the fast way to do it and its energy efficient. I have advocated for my Rural Electric Association to provide it, and we are successful so I'm hoping that more municipalities and Rural Electric Associations will be considering doing this. Some of the things that I would like to see the NTIA be able to provide for us is some guidelines for those who are receiving the grants, just like we have for wheelchairs, for us to be able to have access to have accommodations. The community anchor institutions need to be able to know how to be able to accommodate us, and so we need guidelines in there for each state and for the NTIA to be able to provide guidelines for low dirty electricity on the optical network terminals have for the fiber so that it can be

Karen Perry saved for everyone, but especially for the alert electromagnetically sensitive. It's extremely important for fiber to the premise is to be going to and within the community anchor institutions at least we can have some of these places within our country that the EMS disabled will be able to have hospitals, schools, and libraries and such that we can begin to have public access for and into the multifamily dwellings. Right now, we have no safe housing.

01:08:50.070 --> 01:08:51.030
Thank you, Nancy.

Nancy Van Dover 01:08:52.650 --> 01:08:59.010
It's really important that we be that our accommodations be included in the planning for this grant program. Thank you, thank you.

Karen Perry 01:09:01.290 --> 01:09:05.610
I would like to call on Robert Toporek next and Aaron Hustings is on deck.

Robert Toporek 01:09:08.760 --> 01:09:09.720
Okay, can you hear me. Is this Karen Perry, by any chance.

Karen Perry 01:09:13.380 --> 01:09:14.370
It is Karen Perry.

Robert Toporek 01:09:14.640 --> 01:09:16.680
Karen Perry do you remember, Robert Toporek?

Karen Perry 01:09:18.210 --> 01:09:19.590
Yes, and kind of.

Robert Toporek 01:09:19.710 --> 01:09:21.450
Were you in Philadelphia a number of years ago?

Karen Perry 01:09:22.170 --> 01:09:25.620
Yeah. Do you do support for people with disabilities?

Robert Toporek 01:09:25.800 --> 01:09:28.830
I support everybody that needs a computer.

Karen Perry 01:09:29.520 --> 01:09:38.130
Okay, yes, I was. I had a little bit of a Philadelphia bell going off in my head when I saw your name, and this goes back a long time.

Robert Toporek 01:09:38.220 --> 01:09:40.050
It was a long time ago, but I love you dear.

Karen Perry 01:09:41.040 --> 01:09:47.730

So now, you know I've been in this field for 17 years, and now you know how excited I am to see this Digital Equity Act. It was so exciting to just listen to the presentation from Russ and Rafi and here every piece of that legislation. Robert and I were back in Philadelphia like 16 or 17 years ago thinking about digital inclusion and really on the ground floor of this work, and when these words were new.

Robert Toporek

01:10:14.430 --> 01:10:29.910

I'm going to be 75 soon Karen and I've now without real funding or real staff managed to distribute over 21,000 low cost refurbished computers to family, schools, organizations, veterans, and anyone in need. We've helped so many people it's not even funny and we've helped people from all around our region throughout the state across the country and around the world. I put my phone number and information in the chat if you reach out to me later we can talk about it some more. There's a small network of refurbished there's people that are doing that and it's not really any nationally concerted effort. To provide refurbished computers to people that can't afford to buy new. And we struggle everyday every week, to find more people to donate our computers. I'm a one-man band, so there's just so much that I can do. But at one time, we were able to get computers from the state and from the national government and I don't know that that is in existence anymore, and I would love to know how we can my goal is to raise a million dollars fully fund and fully staffed what we're doing. We have information on everyone that's ever gotten a computer. Everyone that gets computer from us writes a letter and tells us something about their life we have some of the most amazing letters you've ever read from people that are homeless, people that are disabled, people that are seniors, you name it and the difference between us and as best I can tell and other refurbishes are that we include a suite of learning software that a guy in Hong Kong put together and there's a reading module, a math module, ia music module, and then we put links to Khan academy I don't know if anybody's ever heard of Fact Monster but Fact Monster is an amazing free program that anybody can have access to on their computer and then we put a link to power library and anybody can go to that link and have access to the entire resources of the Pennsylvania library. And it doesn't matter where you live, you as long as you have Internet access, you can do that. I'm interested in being in the game of expanding digital equity. And I would love to know how we can take this and go forward with it, and maybe by this time next year, give up another 21,000 computers Oh, we were actually set up now that we could replicate our program anywhere in the country anywhere in the world.

Karen Perry

01:13:07.290 --> 01:13:19.590

Thank you, Robert. My memory is now jogging in and this Roberts place was the first place I ever saw anybody doing refurbished computers and he taught me about it. So that was a really long time ago. I would, like to call on Erin Hustings next and Robin Johnson is on deck. Thank you, Robert for joining in.

Erin Hustings

01:13:35.310 --> 01:13:43.950

Hi, this is Erin Hustings. I'm with Bitwise Industries, we are a social enterprise, based in Fresno, California. We train underserved people from underestimated communities for careers in the tech industry and we enlist those folks in providing tech consulting services and effectively transferring digital knowledge to institutions and individuals in their communities. I wanted to just make a couple of comments about effective interventions and best practices and I want to cosign on the comments by the Oakland and divided representative about the power of digital navigators and add that we have found it's particularly important to employ not just trusted voices in the form of institutions and nonprofits but people who come from underserved communities to be the navigators to speak to their peers and to open up those pathways into further resources and really to help people feel comfortable with reaching out taking advantage of what's there and becoming more digitally literate. I also wanted to encourage the inclusion of private industry in planning processes which doesn't seem to have the private companies weren't among the many stakeholders that were mentioned as necessary inclusions in this process, but not just as providers of broadband services, but as potential employers who's activities can bring and create wealth and underserved communities. Many of our big tech corporations have invested heavily in training in digital literacy in the sense of training folks to hoping that they can uncover more potential people to fill the many, many jobs that are open right now in these fields, from among these underserved communities and areas of folks who haven't had the opportunity to gain skills through traditional pathways. These companies investments need to align with the investments that the Infrastructure Act is making and that companies need to see the folks who will receive will be on the audience end of our digital equity and literacy efforts as not just potential users of their services, but as their employees, their workforce, their core. Thank you.

Karen Perry

01:16:16.170 --> 01:16:30.150

Thank you, thank you, Robin. I've got Mark Bayless next, and I want to tell you who's coming up after Mark, it's Lazon Grays then Eve B. and then Lilibeth Gangas. There's not too many will have this, I think, and we only have about 15 more minutes so I'm going to ask you all to keep your comments to under two minutes. We probably can maybe get that's probably about all the speakers, we can get in so just keep your comments tight, so we can wrap it all up.

Robin Johnson

01:17:09.060 --> 01:17:10.530

That's okay. Hi, can you hear me? All right, great, my name is Robin Johnson, and we Communication Workers of America, CWA. Just a couple of things, brief things. First, I'd like to thank Shelley in regards to the fiber to the premise. I'm doing between fiber and wireless fiber is always to me, the best way to go, I was using wireless. The problem is, is that wireless slows down what too many people are on it with fiber that is basically for you is for your household your business, this is something that you don't freeze on. That's the key thing you want something that's reliable for everybody, especially for those who are homebound. Fiber to the premise is something, especially for those who are homebound as well also another thing is that I do believe that when it comes to

the wi-fi. Wi-fi is OK for the libraries, but you have to look at the cyber security. In regard to the wi-fi ,they have to have something in place for that. Because you know wi-fi anybody can link on to that with a hotspot so we have to be careful when we do the fiber. When we do the wi-fi because you have to understand that there are people out here, not looking to use the right way using fiber basically is just for that person, you know I'm saying they don't have to worry about somebody taking it on their fiber. But wi-fi that is a problem also we have to make sure that we have somebody who's making sure that this money is being spent the right way. These underserved areas, they need to have this fiber to the premise coming to them to where they have access to the Internet. They don't have to worry about the slowness of it, because they might have what more than one person and don't household with them, working from home now, it has to be an effect that everybody has to be included in this broadband bill because. As we know, the pandemic opened up a lot eyes, so we have to also take in the fact that labor has to be included in the bill, because the fact of the matter is, is that we don't want someone coming from another state building something they have no idea what they build it, they only looking at look great they don't live here they don't understand, we have to have made sure that is being.

Karen Perry 01:19:45.030 --> 01:19:46.350
Robin we've got to wrap up.

Robin Johnson 01:19:46.650 --> 01:19:55.440
Okay I'm getting wrapped up right now we have to make sure that, as they will be able to grow employees here have employment opportunities here, but when it comes to building.

Karen Perry 01:19:57.480 --> 01:19:59.550
Thank you, Robin. Mark.

Mark Bayliss 01:20:13.680 --> 01:20:14.610
Hello again, can you hear me? All right, I have my watch so I'll make sure I'm not over two minutes. Mark Bayliss I'm from the FCC Technology Advisory Council and I'm working with the State of Virginia on their broadband planning. I've got one question and a comment. We can't answer questions but. Oh okay. Well, the question okay well if you can't answer questions. Going to get to it, but it was about being able to build backhaul into Indian tribes that are recognized federally if those back halls as they pass through other communities can be accessed from it, if they still if those communities do not meet what would be the digital inclusion.

Karen Perry 01:21:04.770 --> 01:21:07.320
Please send that question in to broadbandforall@ntia.gov

Mark Bayliss I will do all right now, as the NTIA person said, yes fiber is always the best method, because as broadband speeds continue to increase fiber has unlimited basic potential for being able to increase in capacity. Yes, but as far as wireless

goes one of the other callers had said something about the FCC said that wireless wouldn't say there's no such thing on the FCC on that at all, that's a complete the Incorrect statement. In fact, on the IP transition to replace the copper lines and the phone lines that's the 5G is going to be the replacement on the five on the on the transition. Because we only have 2% of the households that are using copper lines now and we're losing \$70 billion per year and supporting those systems. So 5G and 6G which Commissioner just announced in reestablishing of my committee that we are going to lead the world in 5G & 6G intelligent highway systems networks autonomous car systems cannot work correctly without 5G and 6G. That fiber to the home is a good idea, but it's going to be impossible to get rid of wireless communications as a lot of people have stated on here but. All right, that's it I wrapped up under two minutes.

Karen Perry

01:22:43.470 --> 01:22:52.740

Well, thank you very much, Mark. I'd like to ask for Lazone Grays next and note that Eve B is on deck after that.

Lazone Grays

01:23:12.690 --> 01:23:13.290

Can you hear me? Lazone Grays in Topeka, Kansas. I'm with IBSA Incorporated organization is a proud affiliate of the national digital inclusion alliance, thank you. My question or comment is there's a lot of money out there from like the capital projects funds and then, of course, these funds here I'm wondering if there's any way of maybe producing something so they can sit side by side, because a lot of organizations some organizations in this space doing that work that really can't see you know how, all of this fits together in things so there's so much money out there that sort of like a kid in a candy store you just sort of looking at it, because you just don't have a snapshot on what's the difference between this in here, and it seems like the states have to do the same thing with their equity plans and things, so I think that there's going to be some agencies lost out there, and if there's any way of doing some type of a snapshot or side by side, maybe that will help people really understand what's the difference between these impossibly the deadlines and things that nature there.

Karen Perry

01:24:23.190 --> 01:24:24.030

So noted. Eve B. and then after Eve, is Lilibeth Gangus and then, Mary Bauer is going to be our final speaker before I make some wrap up comments.

Eve B.

01:24:48.480 --> 01:24:57.720

Okay, thank you. My name is Eva Borgnant and I am one of the people that Nancy mentioned, I was an electric refugee and still am I have way too much radiation in my home I lived in the forest for 20 years and in my car because of cell tower sprouting up all over the country. I could not find a place to live. I promised myself if I ever got out. I would be an advocate for my situation and that's what I'm doing right now. As the previous speaker said that it's impossible to live without wireless that's not true. We have for all of our history until about 100 years ago and it's much safer for everybody. It's in our

constitution to make the general welfare for ourselves and our posterity and so you are also committed to doing that, by serving for our government. So I just wanted to say, I would like to see you also make a pamphlet educating people on how to hardwire their homes their equipment. People don't even know these days that they can get the telephone line from your local telephone company hardwired they don't know that they can get for Internet hardwired to the local telephone company. That's all really important to go into a pamphlet you would disseminate through this program and also to please do not have grant monies available to people who are doing wireless. Because we do not have a place to live, where the only homeless people have no options, a place to live, people are shielding themselves in their homes and still in much pain and people are homeless living in their cars without any place live, no, no place is safe, so please keep places available without wireless and please through this grant money, we do not need any wireless it's killing birds it's killing nature, we need to keep a future, a future plan for our children, so thank you.

Karen Perry

01:27:08.940 --> 01:27:09.630

Karen Perry: Thank you.

Lilibeth Gangas

01:27:15.210 --> 01:27:21.690

Thank you so much. my name is Lilibeth Gangas and I'm the Chief Community Office Kapor Center, which is a private foundation focused on increasing pathways into tech for communities of color we sit at the intersection of racial justice and tech. I'm somebody who myself as an immigrant who has benefited from the upward economic opportunities at a job in a tech job can provide. For myself I've seen the how important it is and it wouldn't have been possible if I didn't have access to the Internet. It wouldn't have been possible if I didn't have access to a computer and it wouldn't have been possible if I didn't have access to education. I'm here to advocate specifically for Oakland, specifically the East Oakland area West Oakland areas where we have a high density of low-income communities of color who live in apartments and they don't have access to any other way of accessibility. We would like to see the NTIA clear that some of these funds can be used towards low income apartments specifically to help provide broadband adoption and be able to help fund some of the nonprofit organizations and know our trusted by these specific communities, so that that where they're able to get grants right now we've seen with some of the FCC funding available to provide families are low income to get connected to the Internet. Do they have to go through these programs, but a lot of the times, through existing providers are for profit, but a lot of the times, the burden is on the local CBOs and they are nonprofits doing the work for profit, so I find it wrong that were the lot of the hard Labor is being put on the back of the CBOs and nonprofit organizations trying to tackle and support communities of color specifically Black, Latino, and Indigenous. I speak from my own personal experience of the need that I've seen specifically also for families are mixed status immigrants data so being able to provide them connectivity through homes, through apartment buildings, through different areas specifically extending the middle mile to all throughout the area that's more

dense than in East Oakland would be super valuable and it's an equitable it's an equity issue. I just wanted to state that and then also making sure that areas like Oakland are not overlooked. Sometimes we put rural versus urban but it's not an order it's an end, and so we should be looking at how to make sure that we're connecting communities that are low income and providing them fast enough service. This is where the fiber really comes in, and it is now digital access is, it is a civil right, so I want to make sure that we are stating that. And, as a previous caller the mentioned earlier creating broadband infrastructure, our jobs, and these are great paying jobs, and these are jobs are going to take us into the future. I'd love to see more of the funding and grants be allocated to organizations are also providing that type of training and adoption across so thank you so much, thank you.

Karen Perry

01:30:17.520 --> 01:30:23.370

Mary Bauer, do you think you can give us kind of a one minute wrap up before I do my wrap up? And Carole can you put up the slide deck?

Mary Bauer

01:30:39.240 --> 01:30:41.190

I'm Mary Bauer and I'm the technical director of Virginians for Safe Technology a Consumer Advocacy and Educational Group for Responsible Technology. I want to address the comment that was made by Mark Bayliss because he is working on the plan in Virginia. The broadband plan in Virginia to say that the FCC guidelines are being challenged in the DC Court of Appeals and that the guidelines are being revisited for our safety issue so that may have been a correct statement as of August 13, 2021, but at this point the jury's still out. My comments regard the EMS community and wireless broadband being promoted by the Infrastructure Act creates a different kind of digital divide, for the EMS population. They may have access to wireless platforms, which is the X overall goal, but this population, which is about 10 to 15% of the general population won't be able to use it. This also is true for school children that are getting injured at school because they are forced to use it for remote virtual learning platforms their bodies are much smaller and they absorb the rf radio frequency radiation a lot more than an adult body. These are just two parts of the vulnerable population. They are being excluded from getting accommodation and they pay a high price with their health if they don't.

Karen Perry

01:32:03.930 --> 01:32:09.210

Carole can you put up my slides, so we can do that wrap up I need to wrap up slides. And Mary I'm sorry to cut you off.

Mary Bauer

01:32:17.490 --> 01:32:19.410

We heard that message. I just want to make this thing if I could.

Karen Perry

01:32:21.690 --> 01:32:25.020

Please do yeah please give us your wrap up message.

Mary Bauer

01:32:25.110 --> 01:32:40.020

The smart choice is that there are places where wired should be absolutely put in and there are absolutely other places where wireless should be put in and a smart person, maybe like Mark Bayliss might be able to do that in the State of Virginia, thank you.

Karen Perry

01:32:40.920 --> 01:32:42.450

Thank you, Mary for giving us your comments and for making them brief, I really appreciate that and thanks everybody for giving us your comments and for providing all of your insights to NTIA to support us in our planning. This is a transition point for us. We've taken a lot of input and we will be continuing to look through this input, as well as all the written input we've gotten from you and others. We continue to accept input and we welcome you to send your feedback to broadbandforall@ntia.gov but we welcome you to our upcoming webinars which will be technical assistance webinars as we develop our notice of funding opportunities. The technical assistance webinars will be in advance of the availabilities of the notice of funding opportunities, so they'll be pre NOFO webinars sort of kind of a coming soon. What NOFO webinars and they'll start on March 9, but you can register for them at our events page so there'll be March 9 and then upcoming dates, all the way through May. Next slide. And we really want to thank you for joining today's session, and also for supporting all of the efforts in your local community to help build back better in America and for all the work that you're doing in your communities for building the broadband adoption and building equity everywhere. Thank you very much for joining us today.