



February 18, 2021

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

In representing many large and small broadband internet access service and communications providers, as well as broadband infrastructure providers across the United States, we believe that “Broadband for All” should be a call-to-action as a result of COVID-19 and the persistent digital divide in this country. As our communities continue to adapt and rely more heavily on both wired and wireless broadband services to meet the challenging circumstances of social distancing and the coronavirus pandemic, the commitment to reach all Americans and to deliver the broadband connectivity needed during and after this crisis must be embraced.

Despite best efforts, we still face serious challenges in connecting all Americans, including businesses of all sizes, to high-speed broadband. We realize that the mission to achieve universal broadband availability is an ambitious but essential goal. In order to address the growing digital divide in this country and to expand the availability of faster, more affordable broadband in our communities, we call on your Administration, Congress, and the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) to support additional funding for a better broadband future for all Americans. This funding should be targeted to areas where it is needed most, ensuring that communities that have been left behind are served and to help low-income Americans purchase broadband services.

Now more than ever, our communities want and need universal broadband coverage for their students, small businesses, and health care workers. COVID-19 has exposed deep gaps in Americans’ ability to access the internet, and it is time for our nation’s leaders and for Congress to act. Unfortunately, we hear too often about kids doing homework in parking lots because they lack access to fast, affordable broadband at home. This is a national tragedy. To meet this challenge, we ask the federal government to enable solutions that will make a significant difference in the lives of many.


Investment in broadband and 5G infrastructure is an investment in the present and future of our nation, and we support federal investment in network infrastructure in those areas that do not have it, especially in areas that currently do not receive support from the current FCC or U.S. Department of Agriculture programs. In addition, we encourage you to adopt greater transparency and accountability by relying on verifiable maps that comply with Congress' recently passed Broadband Deployment Accuracy and Technological Availability Act. It is important for the nation's investment to focus on the deployment of broadband and 5G networks, encouraging the highest speeds on a technology-neutral basis, *where they are needed*. Thus, investment should be based on an analysis of those locations that still need service and diligent consideration of technical and financial feasibility to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being put to their best use.

We also urge you to incentivize state and local governments to adopt speedy review processes of broadband and 5G deployment projects. Increasing access to public rights-of-way, accelerating approval of construction permits, and requiring state and local governments to charge fees that are based only on their actual, objectively reasonable costs for these projects, will spur faster and more efficient deployment, which will benefit those consumers waiting for access to next-generation networks. Finally, we support any effort to build upon the FCC's Emergency Broadband Benefit Program and to extend assistance to every American household that cannot afford a home connection so they are not left behind in the digital economy.

We have the ability and responsibility as Americans to go big and bold on broadband. To harness the power of the internet and the streaming and cloud-driven economy, now is the time to take steps toward achieving a future of connectivity, faster speeds, and affordable prices in the U.S. With your leadership, we can create bold, new infrastructure goals and urge Congress to enact targeted broadband policies that enable all Americans to access high-speed internet.

Thank you for your consideration of these policy proposals.

Sincerely,



Chip Pickering
CEO
INCOMPAS



Jonathan Adelstein
President and CEO
Wireless Infrastructure Association



Shirley Bloomfield
Chief Executive Officer
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association