



March 19, 2021

The Honorable Janet Yellen  
Secretary of the Treasury  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Yellen:

In representing many large and small broadband internet access service and communications providers, as well as broadband and fiber infrastructure providers across the United States, INCOMPAS and WIA are writing to provide their support for the \$10 billion in the American Rescue Plan's Critical Capital Projects Fund for broadband infrastructure investment. As our communities continue to rely heavily on both wired and wireless broadband services to meet the challenging circumstances of working and schooling from home and maintaining social distance during the coronavirus pandemic, an "Internet for All" commitment that will allow Americans to obtain the broadband connectivity they need during and after this crisis is critical for our nation's economic recovery and success.

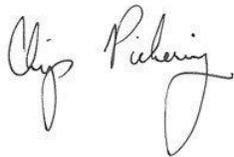
This Congress and the Administration duly recognized in the American Rescue Plan that despite our nation's best efforts and significant investment by the public and private sectors, we still face serious challenges in connecting all Americans, including residences and businesses of all sizes, to high-speed broadband. Achieving universal broadband availability is an ambitious but essential goal, and one that the American Rescue Plan tackles head-on by allocating \$10 billion for broadband infrastructure investment by the states, in addition to \$7.2 billion for the Emergency Connectivity Fund which will fund educational connections and equipment to connect families to Internet service.

As you prepare your guidance for the use of the Critical Capital Projects funding, we urge you to clarify that eligible uses for grant funds include broadband infrastructure deployment, such as extension of networks to communities and anchor institutions, including, for example, schools and/or health care facilities, based upon the states' assessment of its broadband needs. In addition, clarifying that grant funds can be used for operational expenses, such as lease payments, would expedite broadband deployment and promote collocation; and clarifying that durable goods may be funded, as long as they are used during the relevant period, also would enable more efficient and effective deployment. Moreover, we believe that the legislation Senators Warner and King offered during the consideration of the American Rescue Plan should be incorporated into your guidance to offer states clarity that investment in broadband is not only permitted but is the Congressionally intended use of the Critical Capital Projects Fund. Almost \$700 million in CARES Act funding was used for broadband across 20 different states, and new federal funding for broadband via the Critical Capital Projects Fund would be even more

impactful due to its size, as well as the clarity your guidance will offer that investment in broadband is appropriate. Many localities and states were reluctant to use CARES Act funding for broadband needs due to ambiguity during CARES Act implementation last year, and it is important that we not repeat that mistake.

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 the American Rescue Plan's Critical Capital Projects funding is urgently needed to address these needs. Thank you for your consideration of our perspective in the implementation of Treasury's guidance to the states.

Sincerely,



Chip Pickering  
CEO  
INCOMPAS



Jonathan Adelstein  
President and CEO  
Wireless Infrastructure Association