

July 14, 2023

Re: NARUC's Affordable Connectivity Program Resolution for Congress to Act

Dear State Commissioners:

INCOMPAS, the internet and competitive networks association, is the leading trade association advocating for competition policy across all networks. Our membership is comprised of internet, streaming, communications and technology companies advocating for policies that promote competition, innovation and economic development.

Our members have always been at the forefront of the industry—serving as catalysts for change and creating more choices for all consumers. Our competitive providers are building out networks stretching to every corner of the country. They are laying fiber, using wireless technology, launching satellites, all in the effort to move us closer to connecting every single consumer in the U.S. to the internet.

Last month, the Administration announced the allocations for the \$42.5 billion in Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) funding to connect communities in unserved and underserved areas. With the billions of dollars flowing from private and public entities to invigorate the broadband marketplace and create resources to build out critical networks, we also need to ensure that once they are built, people can afford to be on them. A vital component to achieving that is the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The BEAD program and the ACP work hand in glove to achieve the goal of connecting America. However, ACP funding is expected to run out by early to mid-2024. If the ACP faces extinction, it jeopardizes the massive public and private sector investment into the buildout.

Since its creation in the infrastructure package, the ACP has enrolled more than 19 million households across the country. That is roughly 41% of households who are eligible for the program. While enrollments continue to increase, the pot of money continues to shrink with no certainty that it will be refilled. This critical program is more than a \$30 per month subsidy—it's a door to the rest of the world. If this program is not funded, that door will be slammed shut on 19 million American families and cause irreparable damage to the continued efforts to close the digital divide.

We wholeheartedly support NARUC's resolution calling on Congress to provide mandatory funding for the ACP. Annual, mandatory funding will provide the certainty necessary to continue to enroll all eligible households. Connectivity isn't a luxury—it's a necessity to participate in our modern-day economy. All Americans should have access to a reliable, affordable connection, and we will continue to advocate on the local, state and federal level to achieve that goal. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,



Angie Kronenberg
President