



HR 2- The Moving Forward Act

Broadband

- Delivers affordable high-speed broadband Internet access to all parts of the country by investing \$100 billion to promote competition for broadband internet infrastructure to unserved and underserved rural, suburban, and urban communities, prioritizing communities in persistent poverty and ensuring that broadband-related support is being administered in an efficient, technology neutral, and financially sustainable manner.
- Gets kids connected to remote learning with digital equipment and affordable broadband options, connects school buses to Wi-Fi and helps schools and libraries close the “homework gap” outside school.
- Closes other gaps in broadband adoption and digital skills, and enhances payment support for low-income households and the recently unemployed.

Sec. 1307. Rebuild rural grant program. Establishes a \$250 million grant program to support infrastructure investment in rural communities. Focuses on projects that will improve transportation safety, including on high-risk rural roads, on Federal lands, and at vehicle-wildlife crossings; improve state of good repair, including on off-system bridges; and improve access to jobs and services in support of rural economies. Includes consideration for projects that coordinate transportation projects in the highway right-of-way with proposed broadband infrastructure.

Sec. 1603. Broadband infrastructure deployment. Creates a new “dig once” provision to ensure better coordination of transportation and broadband infrastructure projects, while ensuring State flexibility and preventing unfunded mandates. Creates a Dig Once Funding Task Force to estimate the cost of a nationwide “dig once” requirement, and to propose and evaluate options for funding such a requirement. Ensures Task Force consultation with stakeholders that represent rural communities and communities with limited access to broadband infrastructure.

Sec. 31101. Establishment of the Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth. Requires the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information to establish, within the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), an Office of Internet Connectivity and Growth (OICG).

Sec. 31102. Duties. Establishes the duties of the OICG, including conducting outreach to communities in need of better access to, or adoption of, internet service, specifically through organizing regional workshops, trainings, and publications to provide guidance and insights for these communities. OICG will also be responsible for tracking all Federal money being used for both the construction and use of broadband infrastructure and will coordinate with other Federal agencies to conduct a study on the extent to which affordability is a contributing factor to the lack of broadband adoption and on ways to improve Federal subsidies to households to make broadband affordable.

Sec. 31141. Additional Broadband Benefit. Establishes a broadband benefit program that entitles households with a member who qualifies for Lifeline, free/reduced school lunch, or are recently unemployed to receive a \$50 benefit, or a \$75 benefit on tribal lands, to put toward the monthly price

of internet service. Internet service providers would be required to provide eligible households service at a price reduced by an amount up to the benefit, and those providers can seek a reimbursement from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for such amount. The program is appropriated \$9 billion.

Sec. 31161. E-Rate Support for Wi-Fi Hotspots, Other Equipment, and Connected Devices. Establishes a grant program at the FCC, using the authorities that established the E-Rate program, for schools and libraries to fund connectivity for students and teachers in the digital classroom. The program could be used to fund wired and wireless broadband connections at home, and provide connected devices, including laptops and tablets, to homes of students and teachers. The program also supports mobile hotspot-lending by schools or libraries, among other things. The section appropriates \$5 billion to carry out this program, of which five percent of funds is set aside for use on Tribal Lands.

Sec. 31206. Appropriation for Broadband DATA Act. Appropriates \$24 million to the FCC to collect data and generate broadband availability maps required under the BROADBAND DATA Act.

Expansion of Broadband Access

Sec. 31301. Expansion of Broadband Access in Unserved Areas and Areas With Low-Tier or Mid-Tier Service. Appropriates \$80 billion to fund competitive bidding systems to build broadband infrastructure. Seventy-five percent of the funding is to be used for a nationwide system of competitive bidding to fund broadband deployment in unserved areas, defined as areas with service below 25/25 Megabits per second (Mbps), and areas with low-tier service, defined as areas with service between 25/25 and 100/100 Mbps. The remaining funds (25 percent) are to be distributed among States, by population, for States to conduct statewide systems of competitive bidding for broadband deployment in unserved areas, areas with low-tier service, and to unserved anchor institutions (anchor institutions with speeds less than 1 gigabit per 1,000 users). If a State does not have unserved areas or areas with low-tier service, funding may be used for broadband deployment in areas with mid-tier service, defined as greater than 100/100 Mbps but less than 1 gigabit per second symmetrical.

The section also establishes certain preferences for the projects, including where access will be expanded in unserved areas and on Tribal lands; where higher speeds than the minimum specified will be offered; where the project will result in new open access networks where providers may use certain network elements to deliver their own internet service; where the project will increase access for persistent poverty counties or high-poverty areas at subsidized rates; and where completion will happen in advance of the maximum allowed buildout of four years. The section also establishes certain requirements for projects funded under the program, including offering broadband service that provides at least 100/100 Mbps with sufficiently low latency, offering broadband service at prices that are comparable to, or lower than, the prices charged for comparable service, and offering an affordable service plan.