



# **State Connections**

**The broadband working group for state legislators**

**First Friday of Every Month**

**4:00 ET / 3:00 CT / 2:00 MT / 1:00 PT**

***WE WILL BEGIN SHORTLY!***

# Agenda

- Federal & State News
- Letter & Next Steps
- Member Updates



# State Connections BEAD/DE Letter

115 Bipartisan Signatories (we will continue to accept signatures)

## 28 States

- Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin



# Press Coverage



**Benton Institute:** States to DC: “No More BEAD Delays”

**Broadband Breakfast:** State Legislators: Don’t Upend BEAD

**CNET & AOL:** No More Broadband Delays, State Legislators Urge DC

**GovTech:** What’s New in Digital Equity: States Push for BEAD Progress

**StateScoop:** 115 state legislators pen letter to Commerce Dept. with concerns over proposed changes to BEAD program

**Telecompetitor:** More Legislators Request Status Quo for BEAD

**Communications Daily:** Don't Delay BEAD Anymore, Bipartisan State Lawmakers Urge NTIA

**Law360:** Forge Ahead On Broadband Deployment Funds, States Say

**Light Reading:** State lawmakers urge Lutnick not to delay BEAD with forced changes

**Policyband:** State Reps to Lutnick: Keep Starlink Away

**TR Daily:** State Lawmakers Ask Lutnick to ‘Tread Carefully’ on BEAD Program Changes (Paywall)

# Miscellaneous Updates - Federal



- Hearing for Arielle Roth nomination to NTIA held – she was non-committal in discussing changes. She would not even commit to the state's allocations being left alone.
- West Virginia is done with their BEAD process but decided to request a 90-day extension rather than send in their final report and relook at processes.
- We are hearing that more states are becoming concerned about having their broadband process stopped.
- We are also hearing that mid-May is when the changes are anticipated but we are hearing different things about the extent of the changes.
- One option we are hearing is to put a price limit that can be spent per location – this could steer or guide awards to certain type of technology.

# Miscellaneous Updates - Federal

- Consistently hearing get rid of labor requirements, revision or elimination of line of credit requirements and get rid of affordability requirements.
- We talked to some providers to get an idea of the cost of filing a BEAD application. We found some as high as \$200,000.
- Missouri Show Me Broadband Coalition did a similar support letter, state-specific with over 60 stakeholder, state legislators and others signing to allow MO to finish their process without delay
- We are creating one pager, State Broadband Overview, to include broadband information in your state including BEAD process and allocations, RDOF default details, etc. Link to a sample is [here](#).
  - We will create the one-pager for your state. Send email to Janie or Drew at the emails on the last slide.

# Arkansas Update

## 17 Bipartisan Signatories!

### Initial BEAD Results:

- Bringing fiber to over 50% of locations for less than 25% of the allocation.

### State Senator Jane English reports:

- Arkansas had 50% to serviceable locations spending less than 25% allocation
- Cost \$5,000 per location average
- 14 of the 17 electric coops are participating in 98% of service areas
- 17 Arkansas legislators signed the letter to Commerce. Jane educated the Senate Pro Tem about the purpose of the letter and said we needed signatures. It was sent to the legislators and had a good response.

# Wisconsin Update



## 21 Bipartisan Signatories!

## Press Release!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 3, 2025

Contact: (608) 237-9147

### **Representative Udell Defends Wisconsin's Broadband Funding**

MADISON — Today, 115 legislators from twenty-eight states urged the federal government to maintain the \$42.45 billion Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. This bipartisan letter, addressed to Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick, warns against redirecting these funds to satellite providers such as Elon Musk's Starlink.

Rep. Randy Udell (D-47<sup>th</sup> District) circulated this letter in Wisconsin alongside Rep. Jeffrey Mursau (R-36<sup>th</sup> District) and Sen. Melissa Ratcliff (D-16<sup>th</sup> District). Twenty-one Wisconsin legislators joined as signatories.

Rep. Udell released the following statement:

"In 2023, the BEAD program promised Wisconsin over \$1 billion to provide reliable, high-speed internet to every serviceable home. This program works – it's achieved 95% fiber coverage in Louisiana and 100% in Delaware, and implementation in Wisconsin will begin this year.

"Broadband's fiber lines can handle our growing technological needs while satellite systems struggle to keep up. Changes to the BEAD program now could set us back years. There is no reason to delay Wisconsin's internet expansion by redirecting our funds into Elon Musk's pockets."

###



# Wisconsin Broadband

- BEAD: \$1.06 Billion
- Locations: 375,000
- Timeline:
  - Bidding wrapping up
  - Implementation scheduled this year
- RDOF Defaults: \$210,478,577
- BEAD Letter: 21 signatories
  - Circulation Memo
- Outreach
  - Press Release yesterday
  - Considering Op-Eds



# Member Updates

Legislation? Questions? Discussion Topics?

- **Oregon Legislative Update**

- Rep. Pam Marsh
  - Working group proposed legislation to expand lifeline program in Oregon to help broadband affordability
  - Expanded amount from 8 cents to 35 cents for telephone lines and Oregon subsidy increased
  - All without a tax increase (Oregon also has their own state lifeline program)
  - Link to the bill language [OR HB3148](#)
- Grateful to sign the letter
- Will be doing press release as well

# Member Updates

Legislation? Questions? Discussion Topics?

- **Indiana Legislative Update**
  - Rep. Andy Zay
    - Rep Zay said he signed the letter because we don't need to stop. This is the sentiment of many.
    - Indiana had bids on 94% of the addresses/service areas and do not want to start over.
    - Indiana had a hearing on pole attachments as this is an area they want to make easier.
    - We had discussed the importance of having Governors support the effort. Rep Zay offered to talk with his Governor.

# Contact Information



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