



State Connections

The broadband working group for state legislators

Third Friday of Every Month

12:00 ET / 11:00 CT / 10:00 MT / 9:00 PT

May 2026

Agenda

Recording meeting

State Legislative Update - Rep. Louis Riggs

- *Legislating state broadband standards and oversight*

Broadband Office Update - State Director Jeff Lopez

- *Making Broadband Affordable: New Mexico's Low-Income Telecommunications Assistance Program (LITAP)*

State Broadband Legislation Update - Jake Varn, Pew Charitable Trusts

General Updates

- BEAD construction begins
- Non-deployment update
- NTIA instructions to ISPs
- Mounting concerns over pole attachments

Legislative Update

Rep. Louis Riggs (MO-05)

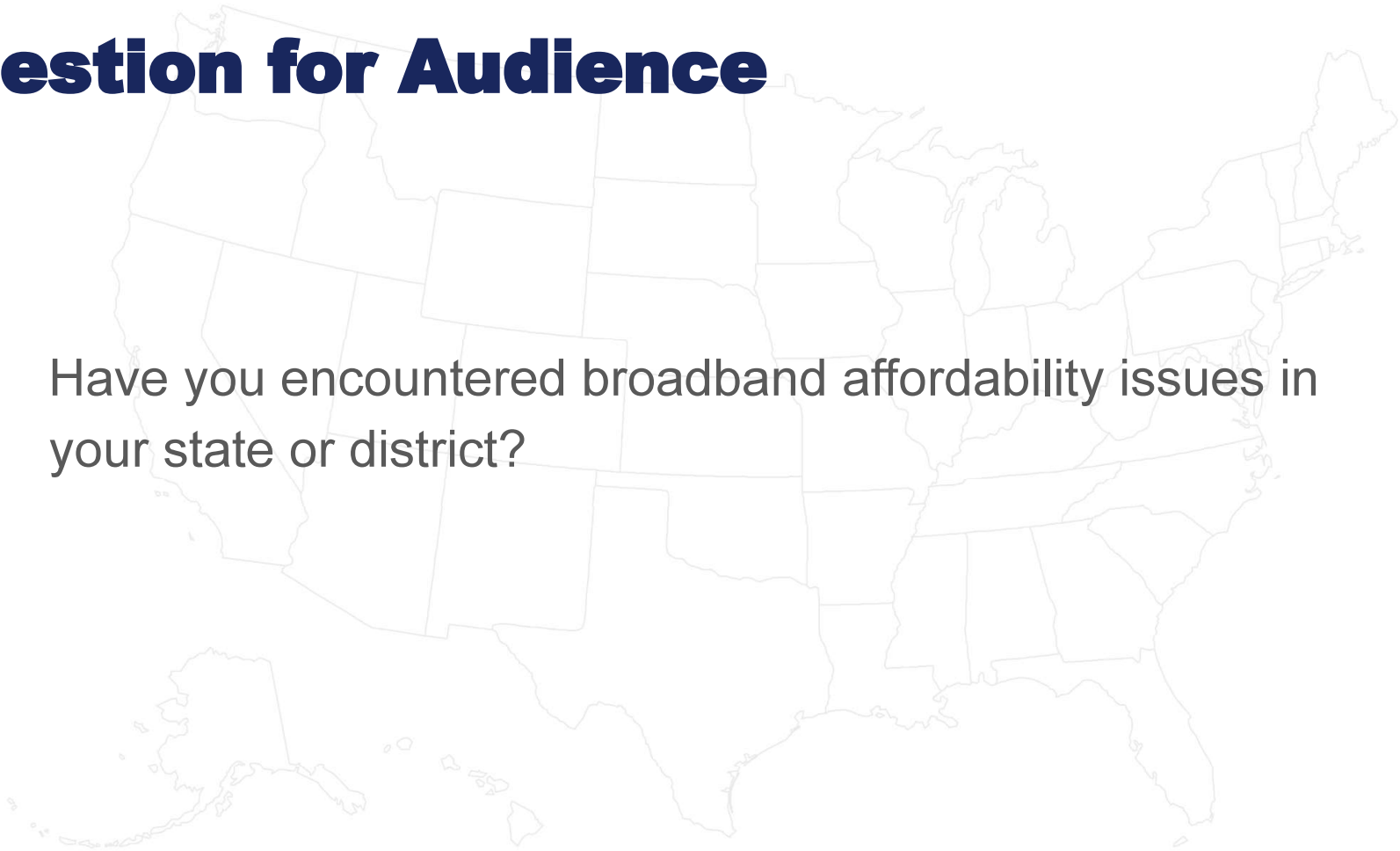
HB 2886 - <https://www.billtrack50.com/billdetail/1924533>

- Had 4 main provisions but was only able to get the sunset date for the office of broadband extended (to 2031)
- This was the most important provision as need the OBD through 2031 to get through BEAD construction
 - Find out what your states' OBD existence provision is – high priority

U.S. Sen. Hawley and U.S. Rep. Alford, sponsors of the Broadband Fairness Act, are still working on the proposal – would direct the FCC to make defaulted funds (e.g. [RDOF](#)) available to states where the defaults occurred.

Question for Audience

Have you encountered broadband affordability issues in your state or district?



An outline map of the United States, showing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The map is centered on the page and serves as a background for the text.

**New Mexico's Low-Income
Telecommunications Assistance Program
(LITAP)**

Jeff Lopez, Director, Connect New Mexico

An outline map of the United States, showing the borders of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The map is centered on the page and serves as a background for the text.

State Broadband Legislation News

Jake Varn, Officer, Pew Charitable Trusts

State Broadband Policy Trends

State Connections

Jake Varn, Officer, Broadband Access Initiative

May 15, 2026

Pew

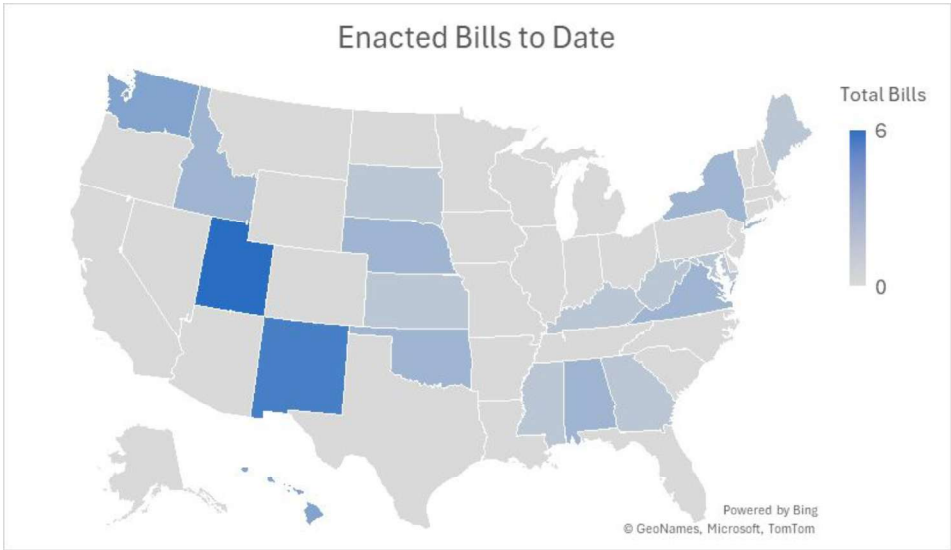
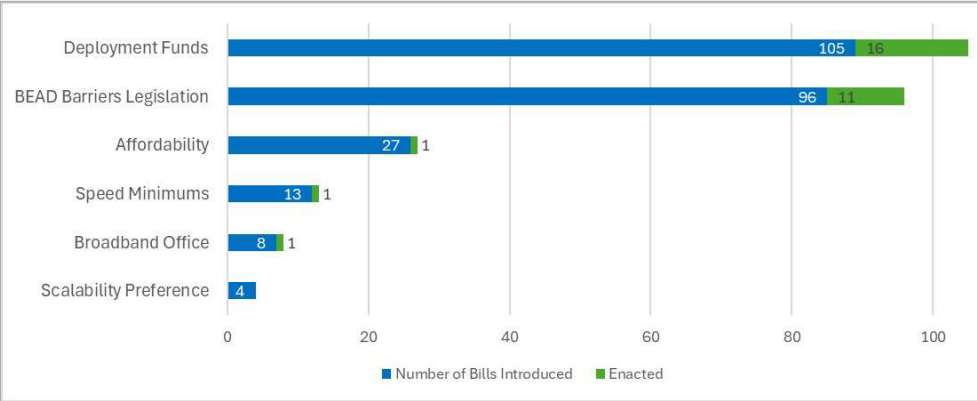
State legislative tracking to date in 2026

NCSL's Broadband Legislation Database:

- 463 bills introduced in 45 states

Pew's Broadband Cornerstones:

- Tracking 200+ related bills, 37 passed in 18 states



Select 2026 Highlights (to date)

Broadband Cornerstones

- Affordability
 - New Mexico – Low-Income Telecomm. Assistance Program ([SB 152](#)) [*Enacted*]
 - Maryland – Low-Income Consumer Program ([HB 382](#)) [*Passed House*]*

State Broadband Office Capacity

- Sunset deadlines:
 - Missouri – ([HB 2886](#)) [*Passed Committee*]
 - Oklahoma – ([HB 2293](#)) [*Passed House*]
 - Colorado [PUC] – ([HB 1326](#)) [*To Executive*]
- Planning and Data
 - Maryland – VOIP study ([HB 1037](#)) [*Passed House*]*

Network/BEAD Deployment Barriers

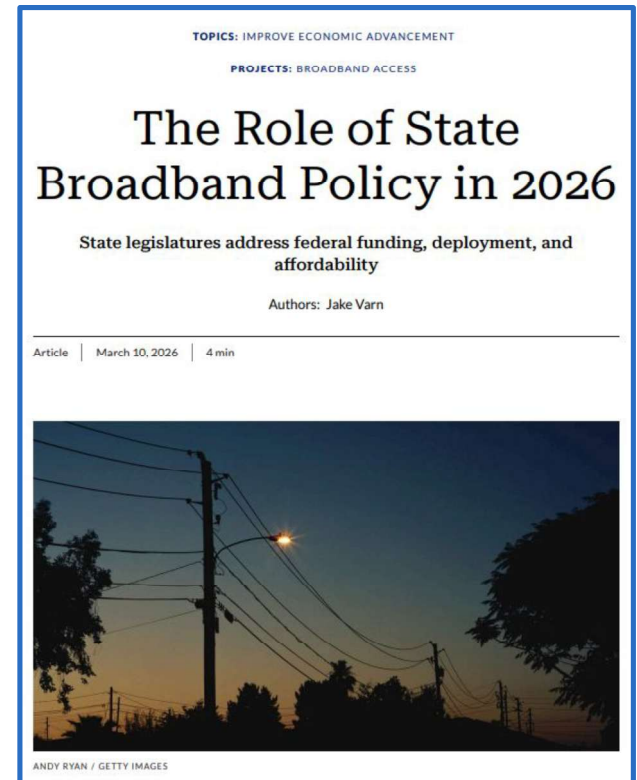
- New York – Tower technicians ([SB 8818](#)) [*Enacted*]
- Virginia – Wireless facilities ([HB 277](#)) [*Enacted*]
- Kansas – Statewide fiber conduit ([HB 2647](#)) [*Enacted*]
- Connecticut – Underground excavation ([SB 321](#)) [*To Executive*]

Thank you

Email: jvarn@pewtrusts.org

Article: [The Role of State Broadband Policy in 2026](#)

For all state broadband bills, see [NCSL's Broadband Database](#).





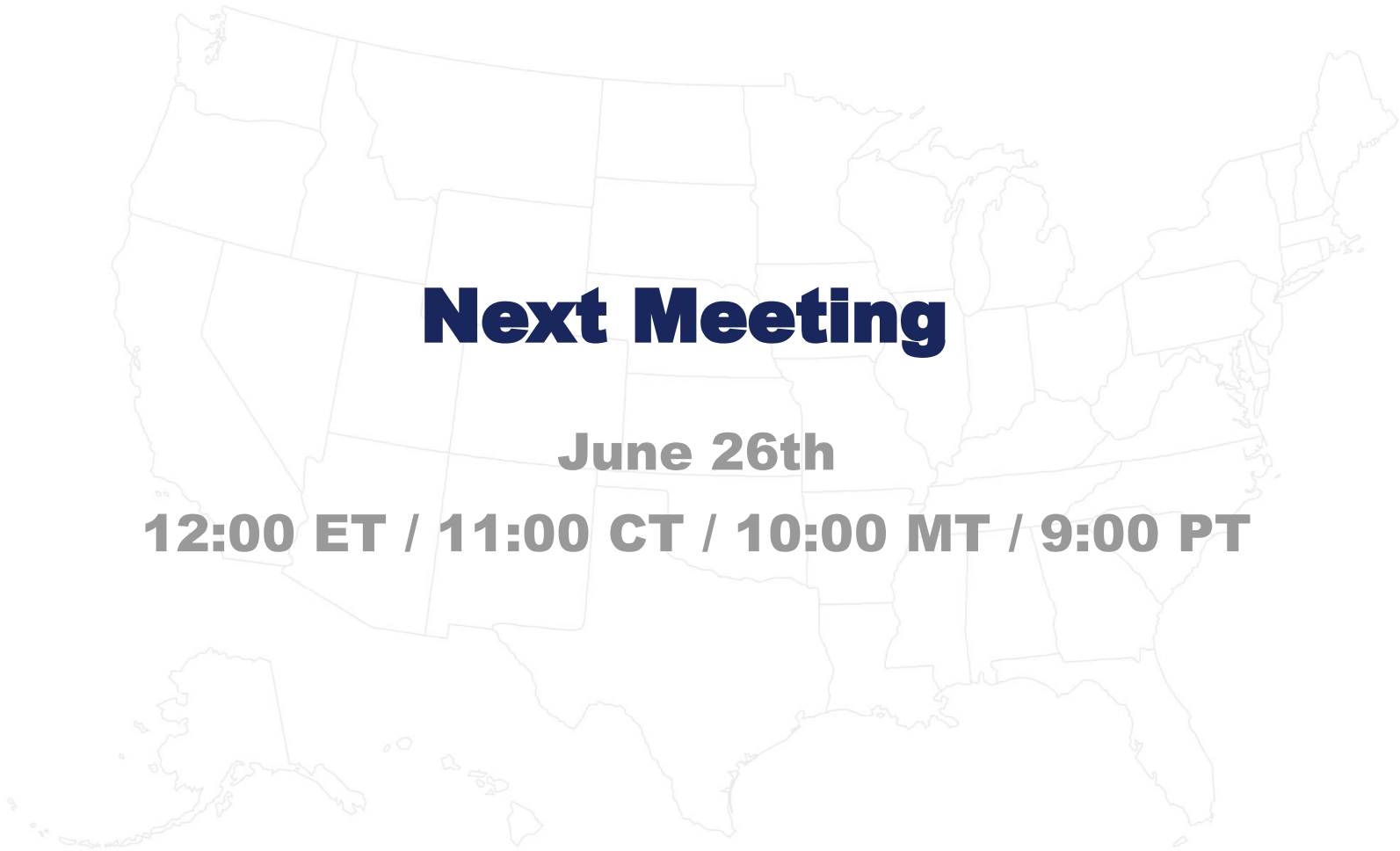
General Updates

BEAD Construction Begins — LA, NE, ND reach milestones

Non-Deployment — Guidance end of June?

NTIA to ISPs — Protect Your Rights

Pole Attachments — Challenges for Subgrantees



Next Meeting

June 26th

12:00 ET / 11:00 CT / 10:00 MT / 9:00 PT

Contact Information



Janie Dunning

janiedunning@hotmail.com

(573) 289-4277

Drew Garner

dgarner@benton.org

(314) 803-7187