



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

August 2026

Agenda

Recording meeting

State Connections Advisory Committee

- Call for volunteers—only a few spots left!
- Bylaws for the committee are in development

Updates from Leadership - Reps. Louis Riggs (MO-5) & Matt Pierce (IN-61)

Rural Cellular Gaps and Trends - Doug Dawson, President, CCG Consulting

State and Federal Broadband Updates - Drew Garner and Reid Sharkey, Benton Institute

State Connections Advisory Committee

Starting in January 2027, State Connections will form an advisory committee of state legislators to help shape our priorities and programming.

Participation details:

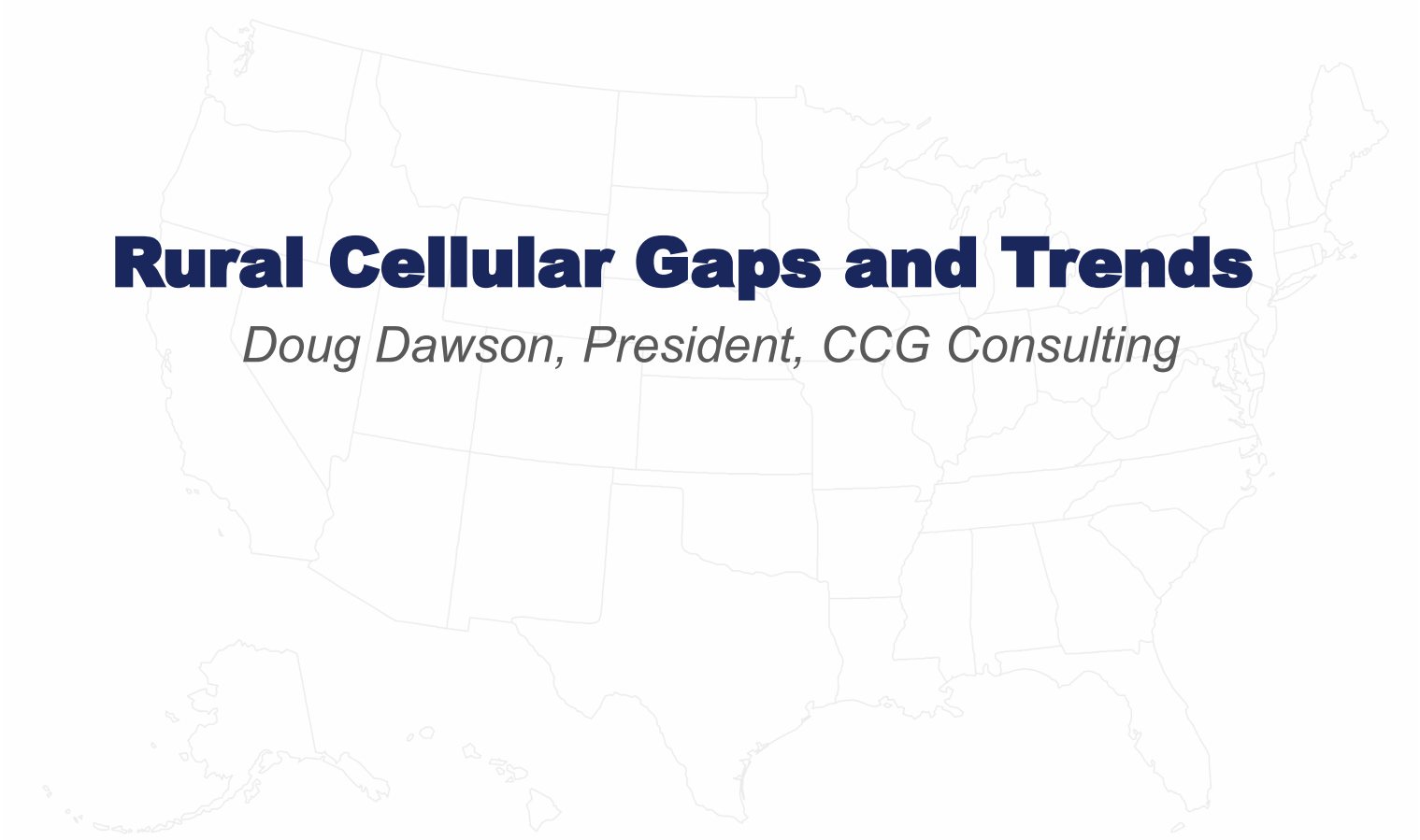
- Quarterly committee meetings — members will be expected to attend at least 2 per year.
- Monthly State Connections meetings — members of the advisory committee will be expected to attend at least 6 monthly State Connections meetings per year. This can be fulfilled by legislative staff.

Please reach out to Janie Dunning (janiedunning@hotmail.com) if you are interested in participating.



Updates from State Connections Leadership

Reps. Louis Riggs (MO-5) & Matt Pierce (IN-61)

A light gray 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.

Rural Cellular Gaps and Trends

Doug Dawson, President, CCG Consulting

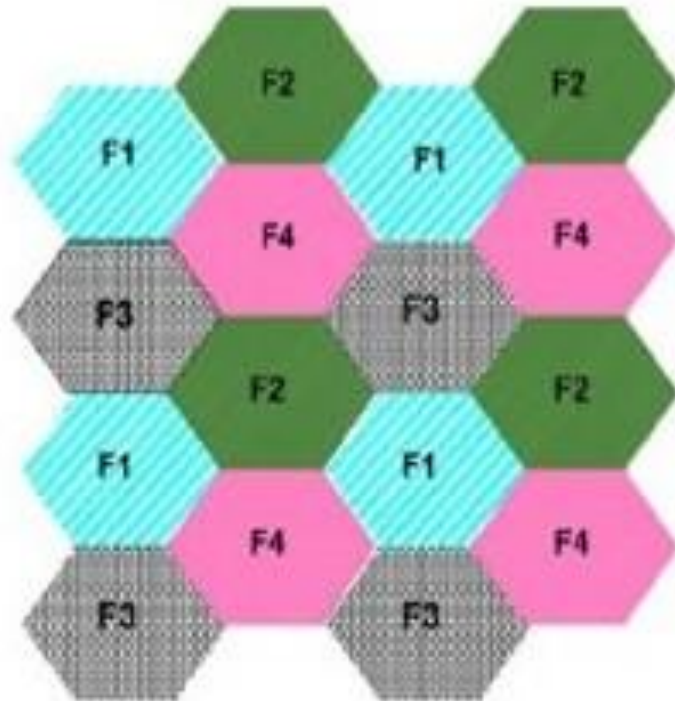
Rural Cellular Coverage

DOUG DAWSON, PRESIDENT, CCG CONSULTING
AUGUST 21, 2026

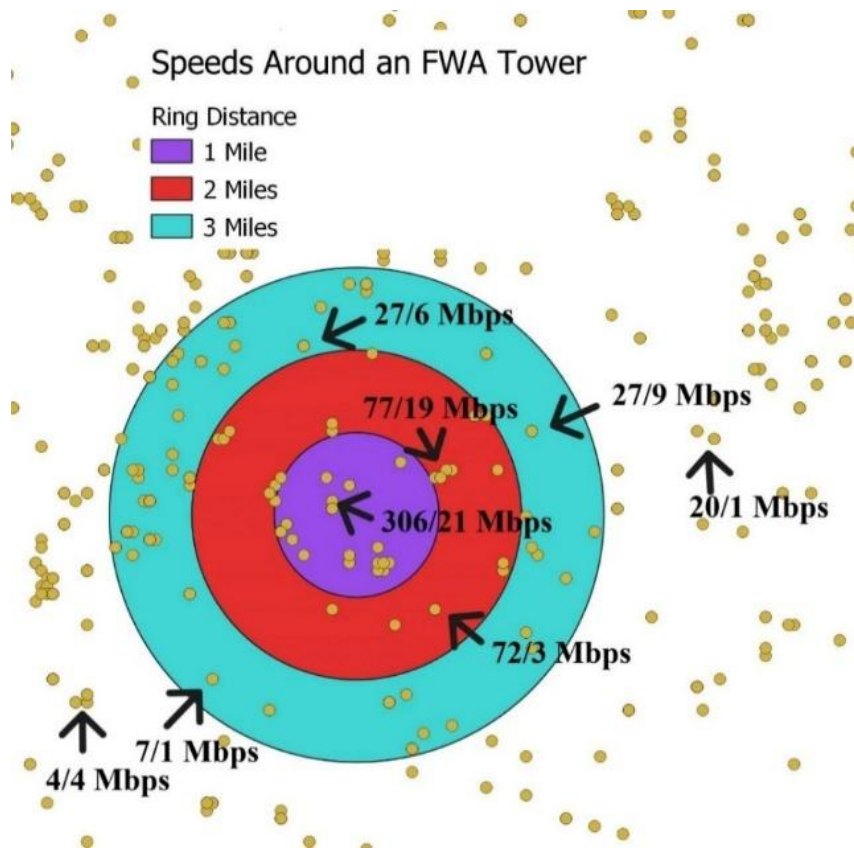
Factors that Affect Cellular Coverage

- Power Levels – Set by FCC. Power levels limit the distance.
- Frequencies – the higher the frequency, the smaller the coverage area.

Why Power Restrictions?



Power Limits Distance



Urban Small Cell Sites



Cellular Frequencies

- Low Frequencies – 600 MHz, 700 MHz, 850 MHz.
 - Travel the farthest, penetrate obstructions easier
- Mid-Range Spectrum – 1700 MHz, 1900 MHz
 - Less distance, decent home penetration
- Higher Spectrum – 3.5 GHz, 3.7 GHz
 - Shorter distances, poorer penetration
- Millimeter Wave Spectrum – 24 GHz, 28 GHz
 - Very short distances, penetrates nothing

Map of FCC Voice Coverage



Map of FCC Voice Coverage



The Upcoming Future

- Around 2030, 6G will be introduced and 4G will be discontinued.
- In general, 6G is going to use higher frequencies than 4G.
- Rural cellular coverage distance will decrease as 4G disappears.

Contact Doug Dawson

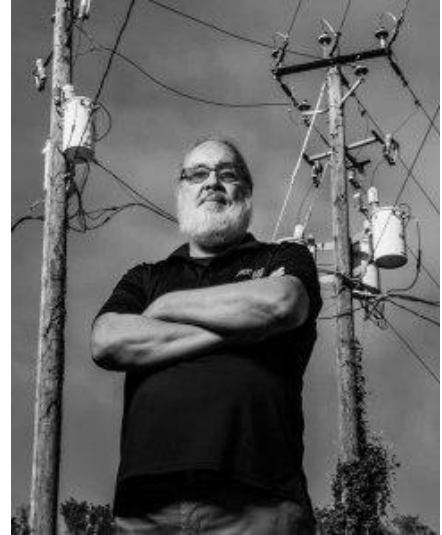
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Doug Dawson

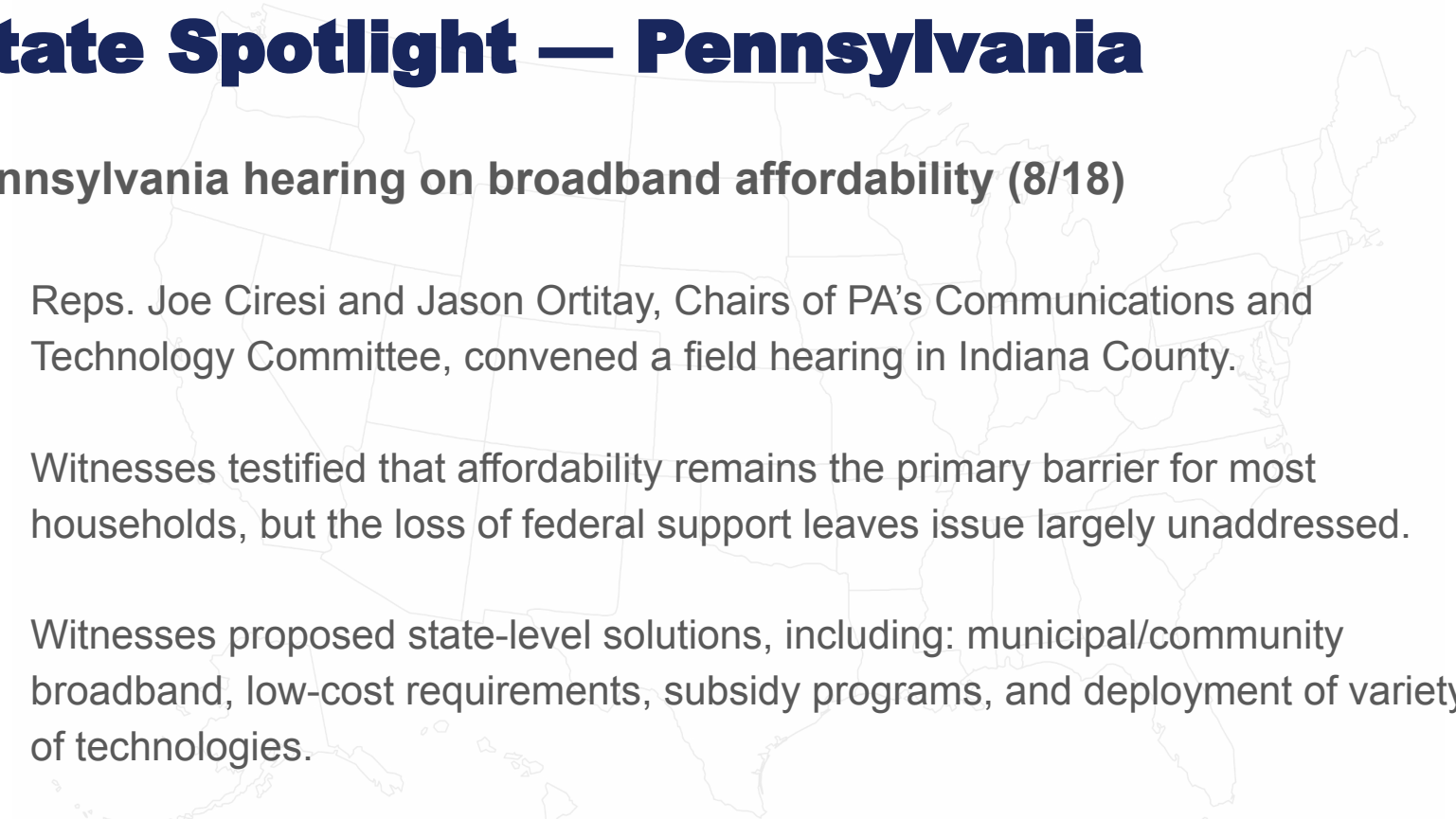
President, CCG Consulting

blackbean2@ccgcomm.com

Blog: <https://potsandpansbyccg.com/>



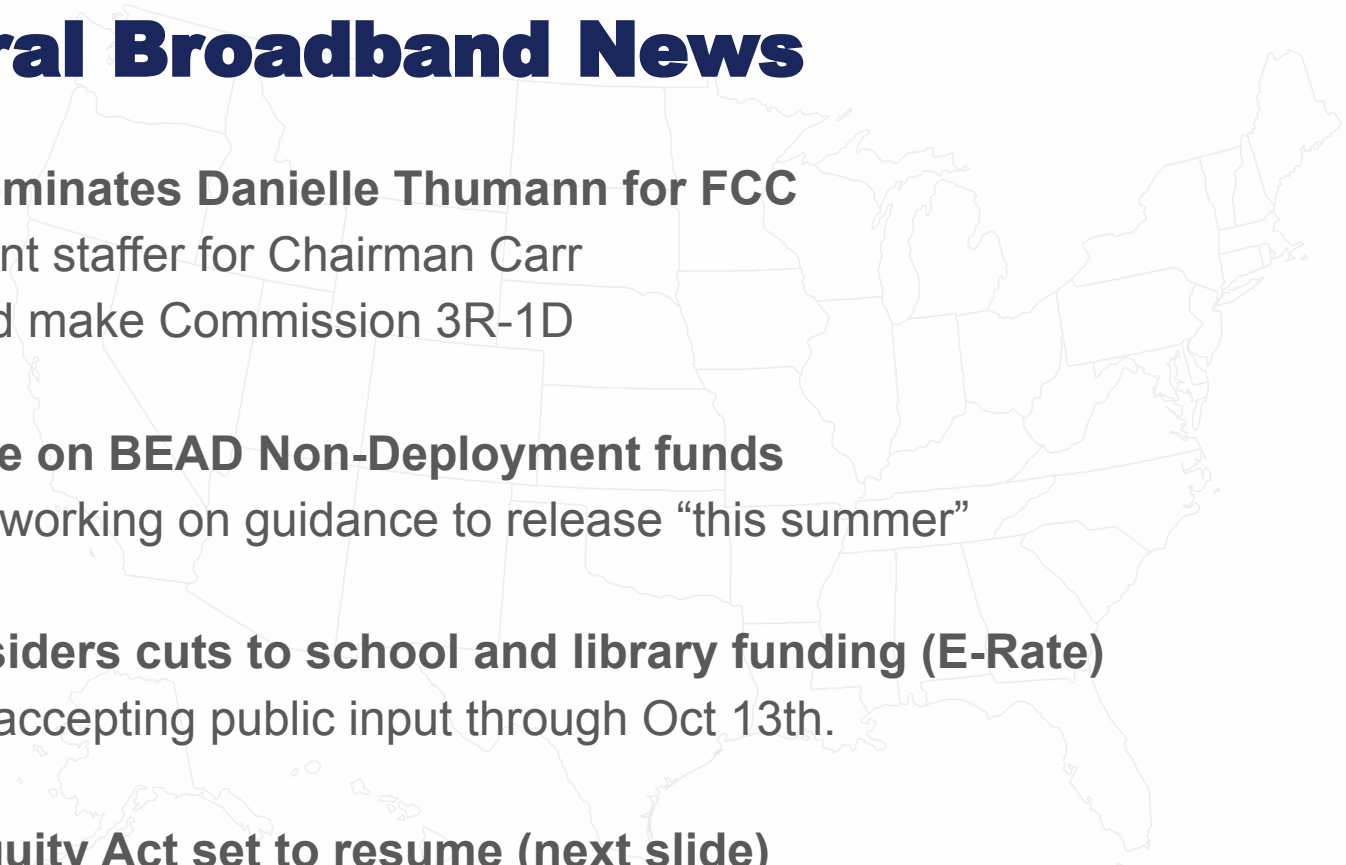
State Spotlight — Pennsylvania



Pennsylvania hearing on broadband affordability (8/18)

- Reps. Joe Ciresi and Jason Ortity, Chairs of PA's Communications and Technology Committee, convened a field hearing in Indiana County.
- Witnesses testified that affordability remains the primary barrier for most households, but the loss of federal support leaves issue largely unaddressed.
- Witnesses proposed state-level solutions, including: municipal/community broadband, low-cost requirements, subsidy programs, and deployment of variety of technologies.

Federal Broadband News



Trump nominates Danielle Thumann for FCC

- Current staffer for Chairman Carr
- Would make Commission 3R-1D

No Update on BEAD Non-Deployment funds

- NTIA working on guidance to release “this summer”

FCC considers cuts to school and library funding (E-Rate)

- FCC accepting public input through Oct 13th.

Digital Equity Act set to resume (next slide)

Digital Equity Act | *NDIA v. Trump* Update

The DEA created three grant programs. Only one was before the court.

State Planning Grants

Complete—not implicated

State Capacity Grants

Terminated—not addressed by the ruling

Competitive Grants

NTIA re-writing NOFO. Targeting December release.

● NTIA plans to rewrite the NOFO

In a filing since the decision, NTIA and Commerce lawyers said they will reinstate the Competitive program without the provision covering members of a racial or ethnic minority group.

● The Court did not order NTIA to act

The court did not direct reinstatement of the competitive grant program. NTIA is choosing to develop a new NOFO based on the opinion. The case is on hold until NTIA releases a NOFO or Jan. 15, 2027, whichever comes first.

● State Capacity Grants remain in limbo

Terminated on essentially the same reasoning, so reopening would be a reasonable next step—but NTIA has said nothing either way.

Competitive Grant Program

\$1.25 billion

Available to cities, counties, nonprofits, libraries, community colleges, workforce organizations, and other entities

**NTIA has not addressed what will happen to awards announced prior to the program's cancellation.*

A light gray outline map of the United States, including the contiguous 48 states, Alaska, and Hawaii, serves as the background for the text.

Next Meeting

September 18, 2026

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

Contact Information



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