

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 26, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, House Republican Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer and Senate Republican Leader McConnell:

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen how inadequate access to fast, reliable broadband can affect nearly every part of our lives, causing difficulties working and learning from home, accessing necessary medical services, and connecting friends and families. Every American should have access to these vital services, especially as we work to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic as quickly as possible. Problems with Internet connectivity are especially acute for rural and lower-income urban communities where high-speed internet services are lacking or non-existent.

As Congress considers additional relief efforts to manage the virus, it must continue to recognize that an investment in high-speed broadband internet for all Americans is a necessary component of our nation's recovery. While we applaud the money included for broadband in past COVID-19 relief packages, it is clear that more investment is needed. We cannot address the economic crisis when unemployed workers struggle to apply to or interview for job openings from home, nor can we manage the health crisis when families cannot access resources to register for a vaccination or consult with their doctor remotely. Being able to connect to quality internet services is not a luxury, it is foundational to our nation's recovery and ability to successfully compete in a post-COVID economy.

Congress should continue to prioritize broadband development and expansion by offering targeted resources in the next COVID-19 relief legislation to be used specifically for broadband needs. In the final text of the reconciliation package, State, local, and Tribal governments should be required to utilize \$45 billion of the \$350 billion that is dedicated for their governments to establish grant programs that address broadband connectivity issues in their communities, whether it is for telehealth, remote learning,

broadband infrastructure, or digital literacy. State, local, and Tribal governments should also be required to ensure that these funds for broadband development and expansion are equitably distributed to underserved areas so that the needs of rural and lower-income urban communities are both met.

Thank you for your prompt and fair consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Josh Gottheimer
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Tom Reed
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Abigail D. Spanberger
MEMBER OF CONGRESS