

Statement on Internet Connectivity in North Carolina

Thanks to the vision and leadership from Governor Stein, former Governor Cooper and the N.C. General Assembly, North Carolina has made tremendous strides over the past several years in connecting our remaining households and businesses across the state to high-speed internet. North Carolina has the second largest rural population in the country, along with hard-to-reach areas in our mountains and challenging topographies in our coastal areas. With the appropriations for broadband infrastructure from our general assembly and the dedication from broadband providers in the state, we are getting closer to closing the infrastructure access gap.

Data from internet service providers in December 2023 reported approximately **344,000** homes and businesses across the state that do not have access to broadband (“unserved”) or do not have sufficient internet speeds needed for modern applications (“underserved”). These numbers represent approximately **8%** of the more than 4.3 million broadband serviceable locations in the state.

The GREAT grant and Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) program projects funded by the American Rescue Plan Act are currently building service to **255,570** N.C. households and businesses. These awards will provide service to almost **6%** of these unserved and underserved locations.

The NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Opportunity has recommended awards for another **93,138** households and businesses through the federally funded Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. These projects will cover the remaining **2%** of locations still without a broadband solution.

Within this 2% of remaining locations, recommended awards through the BEAD program would provide service utilizing the following technologies:

- 68% of locations will be served with fiber
- 0.6% will be served with coaxial cable
- 1.4% will be served with fixed wireless
- 30% will be served with Low Earth Orbit satellite (approx. 28,000 locations)

The Broadband Infrastructure Office within the NCDIT Division of Broadband and Digital Opportunity would like to thank the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for their implementation of the BEAD program. We are excited to continue to work with NTIA to finalize awards and move these projects to the active construction phase. **We will continue to monitor new guidance from the NTIA regarding eligible uses for remaining funds in North Carolina’s BEAD allocation.**

With our submission of the BEAD Final Proposal and S.L. 2025-89, we will continue to work to invest remaining American Rescue Plan Act funds designated for Hurricane Helene Recovery, redundancy and resiliency work and pole replacement, to connect any additional unserved or underserved locations.

Provider-reported broadband data released by the Federal Communications Commission is refreshed every six months, and these six-month releases contain updated versions of the underlying broadband serviceable locations for each state. We will continue to assess this

refined data on broadband availability, with support from the Center for Geographic Information and Analysis and **plan to refocus work at the community-level to ensure identification of any remaining unserved and underserved locations.**

In addition to the federal funding discussed above, broadband providers across the state also continue to make private investments in building across North Carolina. We appreciate their investments and their participation in these crucial programs to create a more connected and resilient state.