

Infrastructure Funding for Affordable Broadband

More Funding Is Necessary to Strengthen the Emergency Broadband Benefit.

- The *LIFT America Act* and the *Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act* include a baseline of \$6 billion additional funding for the Emergency Broadband Benefit program. This figure should be the floor for additional affordability funds in the infrastructure package.
- This means vital, longer-term support for the 34 percent of low-income home broadband users who have struggled to pay their internet bills during the pandemic, and for the millions of disconnected people who haven't been able to afford to subscribe at all.
- Additional affordability funds such as \$4 billion for the *Digital Equity Act* should be allocated separately from the Emergency Broadband Benefit top-up.

Expanding EBB Choice and Collecting Pricing Data Is Critical for Affordability.

- To improve the Emergency Broadband Benefit program, the infrastructure package should require all internet service providers to participate in the program, and require that providers accept the benefit for every single service tier.
- This renders the benefit more valuable for low-income families by ensuring they have the maximum amount of choice regarding how to use the benefit. It also reduces confusion that can be a barrier to program uptake.
- The *LIFT America Act* and the *Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act* also contain provisions directing the Federal Communications Commission to collect data from internet service providers about the actual prices paid for broadband service. Comprehensive pricing data is essential for assessing and promoting affordability now and in the future.

Hardening Broadband Networks and Investing in Utility Justice Are Important Steps.

- The *GREEN Communications Act* includes substantial support for investing in broadband infrastructure that is hardened against future climate disasters, to prevent communications blackouts and disasters like those seen in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria.
- The *Maintaining Emergency Services Act* forgives accumulated customer debt for broadband providers, along with power and water utilities, in exchange for these providers halting all shutoffs for these essential services.
- The *Broadband Justice Act* categorizes broadband as a utility for the purposes of subsidizing internet service in federally-assisted housing, making internet access more affordable for some of our most vulnerable communities.