

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 30, 2023

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United State House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United State House of Representative
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jefferies,

As members of the New Democrat Coalition, we write to advocate for the inclusion of \$6 billion in additional funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) in any government funding package, to reflect the President's Fiscal Year 2024 emergency supplemental funding request. The ACP provides critical financial assistance to help American households afford broadband internet services. Access to high-speed and affordable broadband is vital to participating in our 21st-century economy. Communities without sufficient internet connectivity struggle to keep pace in a rapidly changing world increasingly dependent on technology. The New Democrat Coalition is committed to closing this digital divide and the ACP is a necessary tool to accomplish this goal.

Established in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the ACP currently provides broadband subsidies to more than 21 million households throughout the country. The program has had great success as millions of families who previously could not get online or struggled to pay for broadband access are now connected to the internet. By helping to secure broadband access, the ACP has allowed millions of Americans to maximize educational opportunities, increase telehealth opportunities, stimulate economic growth, and connect with loved ones.

At the current rate of enrollment, the ACP's funding will be exhausted as imminently as early next year. Failure to renew funding for the ACP would once again make low-cost broadband internet service unaffordable for millions of families, resulting in a significant loss of internet connectivity nationwide. This would be a significant step backwards in the progress Congress has made to connect more Americans to the internet through additional federal broadband investments.

The loss of the ACP would also reduce the efficacy of Congress' groundbreaking \$42 billion investment in the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. A recent study found that the ACP reduces the subsidy amount needed to incentivize broadband deployment in rural areas by 25 percent per-household.¹ The ACP is necessary to maximize BEAD program dollars intended to build out our nation's broadband infrastructure and ensure that no community gets left behind.

¹ Clark, K., Fazlullah, A., Garner, D., Golnabi, S., Hill, H., Kalmus, M., McQuiggan, M., and Salmirs, E. (2022). Closing the digital divide benefits everyone, not just the disconnected: An analysis of how universal connectivity benefits education, health care, government services, and employment. San Francisco, CA: Common Sense.

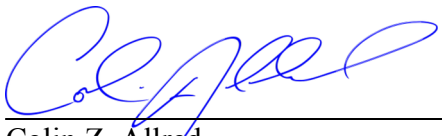
Congress has recognized, on a bipartisan basis, that every American must be connected to the internet to prosper and compete in a 21st-century economy. We cannot risk millions of families losing access to the internet service they depend on every day by allowing the ACP to lapse. We stand with the Biden Administration in recognizing the ACP as a critical service for American families and a priority for our country. As you work to finalize a government funding package, we urge you to include robust funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program to sustain the program through December of 2024. This funding will keep Americans connected as Congress continues to work to develop a permanent funding pathway for this critical broadband program.


Sincerely,



Ann McLane Kuster
Chair
New Democrat Coalition



Angie Craig
Member of Congress

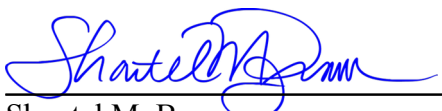

Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress

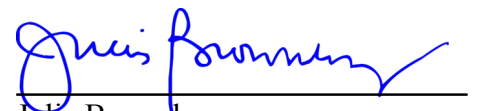

Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress


Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress


Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

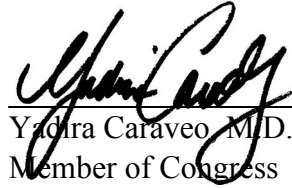

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress


Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress

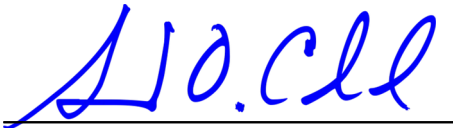

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



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Salud Carbajal
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André Carson
Member of Congress



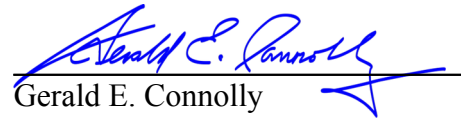
Troy Carter
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Sean Casten
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Joaquin Castro
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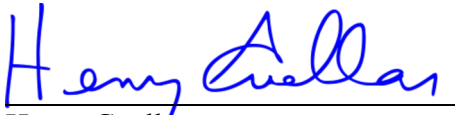
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

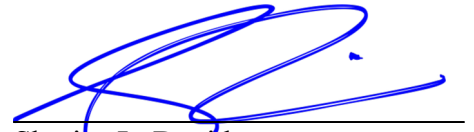



Jim Costa
Member of Congress

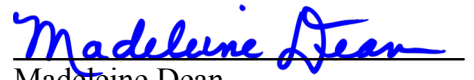



Jason Crow
Member of Congress

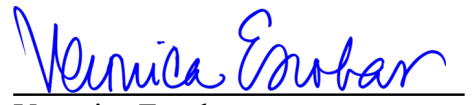

Henry Cuellar
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Suzan K. DelBene
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Veronica Escobar
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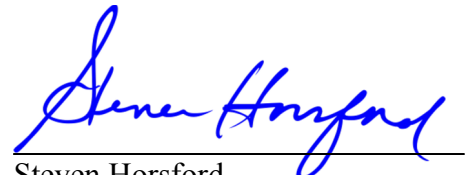

Valerie P. Foushee
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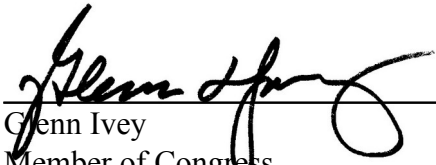
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress



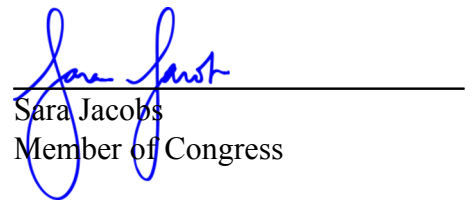
Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



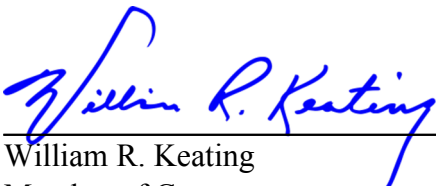
Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



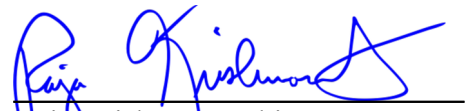
Glenn Ivey
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Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



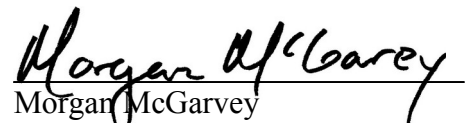
William R. Keating
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



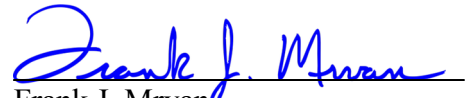
Susie Lee
Member of Congress



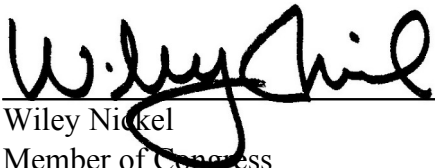
Morgan McGarvey
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Seth Moulton
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Wiley Nickel
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Jimmy Panetta
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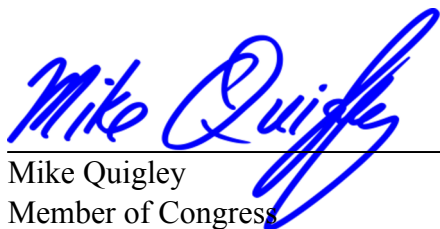
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
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Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



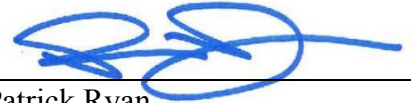
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



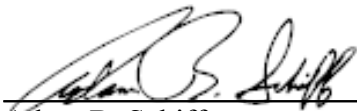
Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress



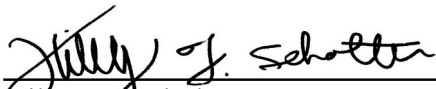
Patrick Ryan
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Adam B. Schiff
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Bradley Scott Schneider
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Hillary J. Scholten
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Terri A. Sewell
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Mikie Sherrill
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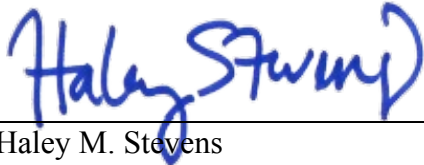
Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



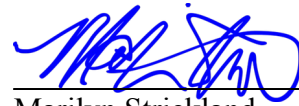
Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



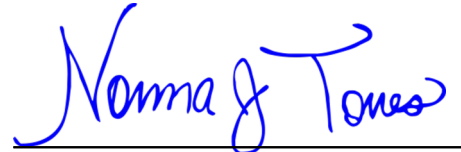
Haley M. Stevens
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Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



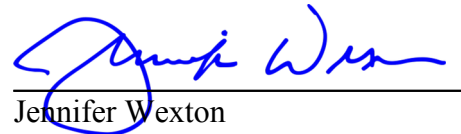
Lori Trahan
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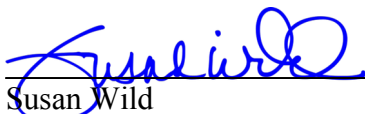
David J. Trone
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Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Jennifer Wexton
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Susan Wild
Member of Congress



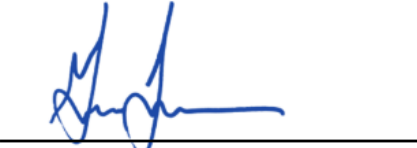
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress




J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Emilia Sykes
Member of Congress

cc: Chair of Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Patty Murray
Vice Chair of Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Susan Collins
Chair of House Committee on Appropriations, Rep. Kay Granger
Ranking Member of House Committee on Appropriations, Rep. Rosa DeLauro