

Broadband



Discover the App Economy





Key Takeaways

- 1** Broadband infrastructure is critical for all Americans to work, go to school, and access healthcare services. Eleven percent of Americans do not currently have access to high-speed internet in their area, and many struggle to pay monthly internet bills.
- 2** Expansion of broadband infrastructure and wireless networks will create 8.5 million jobs in the United States by 2025.
- 3** Congress should support fast, reliable, affordable broadband to all Americans in several ways as outlined here.



Closing the Digital Divide Through Robust Broadband Infrastructure

Now more than ever, Americans depend on the internet to access healthcare services, go to school, and participate in the global economy – a development the pandemic accelerated. The future of the \$6.3 trillion app economy, which serves as today’s touchpoint across consumer and enterprise use cases, depends on the strength and density of America’s wireless and wired backhaul networks. The deployment of next generation wireless networks will create 8.5 million jobs in the United States by 2025, enabling improvements in economic productivity, employment, and consumer value. 5G will affect the labor market through direct and indirect means, with the broadest impact coming from jobs enabling new applications, services, ways of doing business, and economic growth of businesses. Workers will earn more than \$560 billion during that time, create \$1.7 trillion in additional output, and add more than \$900 billion to U.S. gross domestic product.

About 11 percent of all Americans do not have adequate access to high-speed mobile broadband internet, leaving them on the wrong side of the growing digital divide, which exacerbates disparities and inequities. To reach these underserved and unserved Americans across the country, the federal government must incent and support the deployment of needed infrastructure.

The federal government should support fast, reliable, and affordable broadband to all Americans by:

Streamlining broadband infrastructure deployment

Federal policymakers must take steps to address numerous well-documented barriers that unnecessarily add costs and time to broadband infrastructure deployments through means such as “shot clocks” for small cell applications and “dig once” infrastructure funding policies. Across the country, ACT | The App Association small business innovator members rely on high-capacity wireless broadband networks to compete across sectors of the economy. **We call on federal policymakers to take much-needed steps to streamline broadband infrastructure buildouts, and for congressional oversight to achieve this goal.**

Supporting spectrum allocations that enable fast deployment and advancement of high-speed wireless broadband networks

To address last-mile connectivity challenges, federal policymakers must support spectrum allocations that enable 5G innovations in America by opening more bands to both licensed and unlicensed uses, including through dynamic sharing arrangements, based on sound engineering analyses. **Congress should provide for the staggered reallocation and/or sharing of certain spectrum bands identified as ideal for use by next-generation connectivity and innovations—a “spectrum pipeline”—to support America’s goals and create jobs in your district.**

Developing better broadband mapping for America

How many of your constituents truly have the broadband access they need? Without accurate maps, nobody really knows. The App Association supports federal efforts to bring better broadband to Americans through improved broadband maps, which will drive more efficient and equitable access to broadband. More accurate and granular maps that can correctly identify unconnected and underserved communities and areas are essential to a variety of federal programs and efforts and would assist App Association members in product development. **Congress, and federal agencies, must continue to prioritize developing publicly-accessible broadband maps with improved depth and accuracy.**

Extending the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

Since 1985, the federal government has subsidized connectivity services for low-income Americans through the Lifeline program. Lifeline supports low-income broadband adoption by providing a discount for qualifying consumers' monthly broadband bills. Last year, Congress created the ACP with \$14.2 billion in funding to eclipse the Lifeline program with a legal framework that fits modern needs and is a better complement to other new programs. In addition to ACP's monthly support enabling consumers to use an internet service provider of their choice, ACP also directly supports putting a device in the consumer's hands. **We urge Congress to extend the successful ACP in a manner that is sustainable and continues to ensure all Americans have the opportunity to connect to high-speed broadband.**

