

RON WYDEN
OREGON

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE

221 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-5244

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3703

COMMITTEES:
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March 30, 2021

The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
Acting Chairwoman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel:

I write to thank you for our recent productive conversation and to reiterate my strong commitment to taking bold, aggressive action that will expand broadband access for all Americans. As Congress looks ahead to an infrastructure package that will help communities recover from the COVID-19 crisis, in line with President Biden's Build Back Better agenda, we have a unique opportunity to close this country's digital divide and jumpstart future job and wage growth across the country.

I believe it is time for our country to state unequivocally that it is an American priority to make broadband in 2021 what electricity became eighty years ago: an essential service on which every household could count, in every nook and cranny of rural America. During the heart of the Great Depression, this country built out energy infrastructure to light up rural America and ensure that every community benefited from modern technology. Now, almost a century later, the internet is that modern technology necessary to drive economic growth, promote education and health care, and improve Americans' daily lives in all communities across the country.

My experiences in my home state of Oregon have been particularly illustrative to this point. Since becoming a United States Senator for Oregon, I have held town halls in every county, every year. Through these dialogues, I have seen firsthand how high-quality, reliable broadband can lift towns up. Unfortunately, I have also seen how rural and lower-income communities risk being left behind without first-class broadband infrastructure. If there were any debate about the fundamental role that broadband plays in today's digital world, the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis made the answer abundantly clear: fast, reliable broadband is now as essential as electricity, and the federal government must make sure everyone can access it.

I know you share my commitment to turning around our country's connectivity crisis, with the ultimate goal of getting 100% of Americans within reach of high-speed broadband, 100% of the time. Congress is fortunate to have such a determined and passionate partner at the helm of the FCC, and I am encouraged by the important steps you have already taken, such as addressing this country's broken broadband mapping system and implementing the Emergency Broadband Benefit program. For its part, over the past few months, Congress has appropriated over \$20

911 NE 11TH AVENUE
SUITE 630
PORTLAND, OR 97232
(503) 326-7525

405 EAST 8TH AVE
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EUGENE, OR 97401
(541) 431-0229

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105 FIR ST
SUITE 201
LA GRANDE, OR 97850
(541) 962-7691

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310 WEST 6TH ST
ROOM 118
MEDFORD, OR 97501
(541) 858-5122

THE JAMISON BUILDING
131 NW HAWTHORNE AVE
SUITE 107
BEND, OR 97701
(541) 330-9142

707 13TH ST, SE
SUITE 285
SALEM, OR 97301
(503) 589-4555

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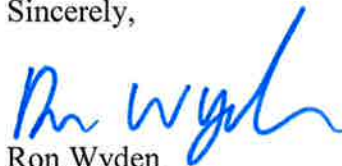
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billion for initiatives that will promote both adoption and deployment during the pandemic and beyond. However, the federal government cannot stop there. In 2017, the FCC estimated it would cost \$80 billion to expand broadband access to every household, and the price tag has likely risen since then.

I believe now is exactly the right time to state clearly and publicly that this is a national priority. Congress and the Administration are already working on a major infrastructure package. As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance, which has a lead role in infrastructure financing, I am committed to working with you and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that investments in broadband are at the center of any comprehensive infrastructure bill. This commitment must and will remain unshakeable until every American can count on high-speed, reliable broadband service. Only in this way can the United States continue to lead on the global stage in today's digital world.

I am so grateful that we share this vision for America's connected future, and together, in calling for the deployment needed to make this goal a reality: big, bold, and timely action on broadband, patterned on the success of the Rural Electrification Act. Making this a national priority now will make a difference. It should have happened years ago. I look forward to working together to make it happen now.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator