

Coalition Says State-Level Data Critical To Connecting Millions of Low-Income Apartment Units That Lack Home Broadband

NTIA Urged To Ensure States Can Accurately Identify Unserved Households in MDUs When Deploying Infrastructure Bill Funds

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – March 16, 2022 – Today, a coalition of organizations focused on broadband policy, housing, and addressing challenges facing under-resourced communities in our nation's cities and throughout the country called for urgent action to ensure unserved households in multi-family residential housing (MDUs) are correctly identified when broadband funding is allocated.

In a letter to Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, the group, led by the national non-profit EducationSuperHighway, urged the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to use its authority to encourage states to supplement new FCC Maps with data that identifies specific apartment units that lack access to reliable broadband service.

While applauding Federal Communications Commission (FCC) efforts to strengthen their maps and identify whether an apartment building has an internet connection, the coalition highlights the need to accurately count unconnected units within each building to deliver on the shared goal of closing America's digital divide.

"States must be encouraged and allowed to collect supplemental data from ISPs to identify unserved MDU households," said Evan Marwell, Founder and CEO of EducationSuperHighway. "Access to broadband is an integral part of participating in the 21st-century, and these unserved, unconnected communities cannot be relegated to the back of the line solely based on the physical structure within which they reside."

The letter highlights improvements in Wi-Fi technology have made it possible to connect households living in MDUs to reliable broadband service simply by deploying Wi-Fi access points in the hallways and then connecting the Wi-Fi network to a high-speed broadband connection to the building. These reliable, high-speed networks can be deployed in months, not years, and have the potential to quickly and cost-effectively connect millions of unserved and unconnected households living in low-income apartments, rentals, housing cooperatives, and public housing. These are the very same households who represent a large percentage of the most unconnected households in America: very low-income renters and communities of color.



Led by EducationSuperHighway, the coalition includes African American Mayors Association, All4Ed, Benton Institute for Broadband and Society, CoSN – Consortium for School Networking, Council for Affordable and Rural Housing, Chiefs for Change, Common Sense, First Focus on Children, HPN - Housing Partnership Network, Institute for Real Estate Management, MMTC - Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council, National Affordable Housing Management Association, National Apartment Association, National Association of Home Builders, National Association of Housing Cooperatives, National Digital Inclusion Alliance, National League of Cities, National Leased Housing Association, NAFSCE - National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement, NMHC - National Multifamily Housing Council, NSBA - National School Boards Association, New America - Open Technology Institute, New Century Cities, #OaklandUndivided, Public Knowledge, Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future, and US Ignite.

To view a copy of the letter sent to Secretary Raimondo, visit: [<Insert Link>](#)

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ABOUT EDUCATIONSUPERHIGHWAY

EducationSuperHighway is a national non-profit with the mission to close the digital divide for the 18 million households that have access to the Internet but can't afford to connect. We focus on America's most unconnected communities, where more than 25% of people don't have Internet.

From 2012 to 2020 we led the effort that closed the classroom connectivity gap. In 2013, only 10% of students had access to digital learning in their classrooms. Today, thanks to an unprecedented bi-partisan effort by federal, state, and school district leaders, supported by K-12 advocacy organizations, the classroom connectivity gap is closed - 47 million students are connected, and 99.3% of America's schools have a high-speed broadband connection.

www.educationsuperhighway.org