RELEASE: Black Churches' "National Day of Action for Digital Equity" Connects Community Members to Low-Cost Internet

Eight Black Churches Across the Country Hosted Sign-Up Events on Saturday for the federal Affordable Connectivity Program

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced education, work, health care, and even church services online for millions of Americans, families without a home internet connection – disproportionately Black, Brown and low-income – were cut off from digital lifelines.

On September 24, 2022, eight Black Churches across the country took historic steps to help close this digital divide, hosting events to help congregants and community members sign up for the federal **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)**.

Organized by **Black Churches 4 Digital Equity (BC4DE)** – a nationwide movement of Black church leaders – this **National Day of Action for Digital Equity** drew an estimated 1,000 attendees to events designed to educate community members on ACP eligibility and help qualifying households sign up and enroll.

29% of Black adults nationwide don't have a home internet connection. The ACP, created by the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act, offers a $30 monthly subsidy to help families in need buy home internet service – enough to cover the full cost of high-speed service from participating ISPs including AT&T, Charter Communications, Comcast, T-Mobile, Verizon, and more than a dozen others. Participants can also receive a one-time $100 subsidy to help buy a computer or tablet. An estimated 48 million households are eligible for the ACP – yet fewer than one-third of eligible households have enrolled.

"Long before the pandemic highlighted our nation's digital divide, Black churches have worked to expand internet connectivity and provide educational opportunities for adults. Many churches were among the vanguard in establishing computer labs for parishioners and members of the public. Working to get every member of our church communities connected to home internet is a continuation of this legacy," said **Dr. Fallon Wilson**, VP of Policy at the Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC) and lead organizer of the BC4DE Coalition.

"Internet connections and digital skills are essential for full enfranchisement for our community. As the late Congressman John Lewis said, 'Access to the internet is the civil rights issue of the 21st Century.' We're proud to join Black church leaders from across the country in organizing to end the digital divide," said **Rev. William H. Lamar IV,** pastor of Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Washington D.C., which held a Day of Action event in partnership with Martha's Table earlier today in our nation's capital.

BC4DE's organizing efforts to encourage ACP enrollment will continue with additional Day of Action events in October hosted by churches in Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.

About Black Churches 4 Digital Equity:

BC4DE (www.blackchurches4digitalequity.com) is a nationwide movement of Black church leaders working to educate members of our community about free and low-cost broadband programs, encourage unconnected households to get online, to train and organize leaders as advocates to advance digital equity. Our national coalition of 25 Black churches and Black church nonprofit organizations collectively touch more than 500,000 people weekly.

BC4DE is organized by the Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (MMTC), a leading public interest tech organization that has fought for equal access and representation in tech, media, and telecommunications since its founding in 1986.