

From: [John Windhausen](#)
To: [SHLB](#)
Subject: {SHLB} Arielle Roth to lead NTIA
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 8:33:46 AM

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According to Broadband Breakfast:

NTIA: It's Arielle! Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) announced Monday night that his Telecommunications Policy Director **Arielle Roth** has been nominated by **President Donald Trump** to run the **National Telecommunications and Information Administration** and the troubled \$42.45 billion BEAD program. The nomination – which needs to pass through Cruz's panel – would give BEAD-skeptic Cruz substantial influence over the direction of the broadband subsidy program that has not connected a single American since late 2021. "Arielle led my legislative and oversight efforts on communications and broadband policy with integrity, creativity, and dedication. She has fought to defend the taxpayer, free speech, and kids online," Cruz said on his X feed. A lawyer **educated in Canada and a mother of five children**, Roth has an extensive background in telecom policy at the staff level. She worked as an advisor to former **FCC Commissioner Michael O'Rielly**, as Legislative Counsel to former **Sen. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.)**, and as **Counsel on Detail to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce**. Before entering government, Roth was a **Legal Fellow with the Hudson Institute's Center for the Economics of the Internet**. "She will be a terrific leader at NTIA and I look forward to working together to deliver results for the American people," **FCC Chairman Brendan Carr** said on his X feed Monday. Roth is married to **attorney Yaakov Roth**, a partner at Jones Day who won the landmark Supreme Court case **West Va. V. EPA (2022)** in which the court established the **Major Questions Doctrine** that barred a federal agency like the FCC from adopting regulations of vast economic and political significance unless Congress has clearly empowered the agency to do so. Last August, the Sixth Circuit blocked **Net Neutrality** rules adopted by **FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel**, citing the Major Questions Doctrine.

--

Executive Director
John Windhausen

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jwindhausen@shlb.org



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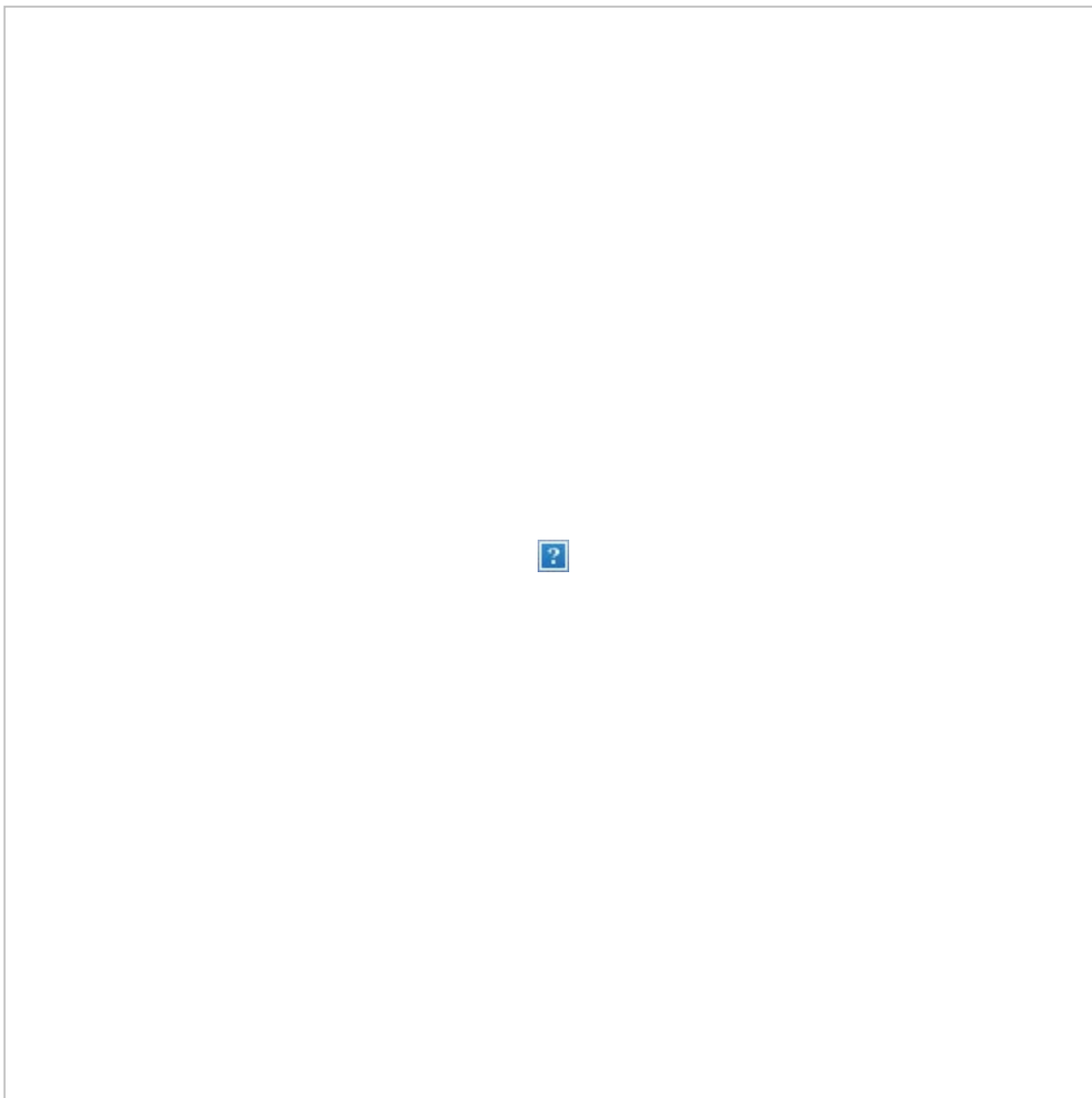
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From: alerts=broadbandbreakfast.com@ghost.broadbandbreakfast.com on behalf of [Broadband Breakfast](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: ACA Connects Pushes for Less Regulation, Faster BEAD Deployment
Date: Friday, January 31, 2025 6:57:33 PM

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ALERTS

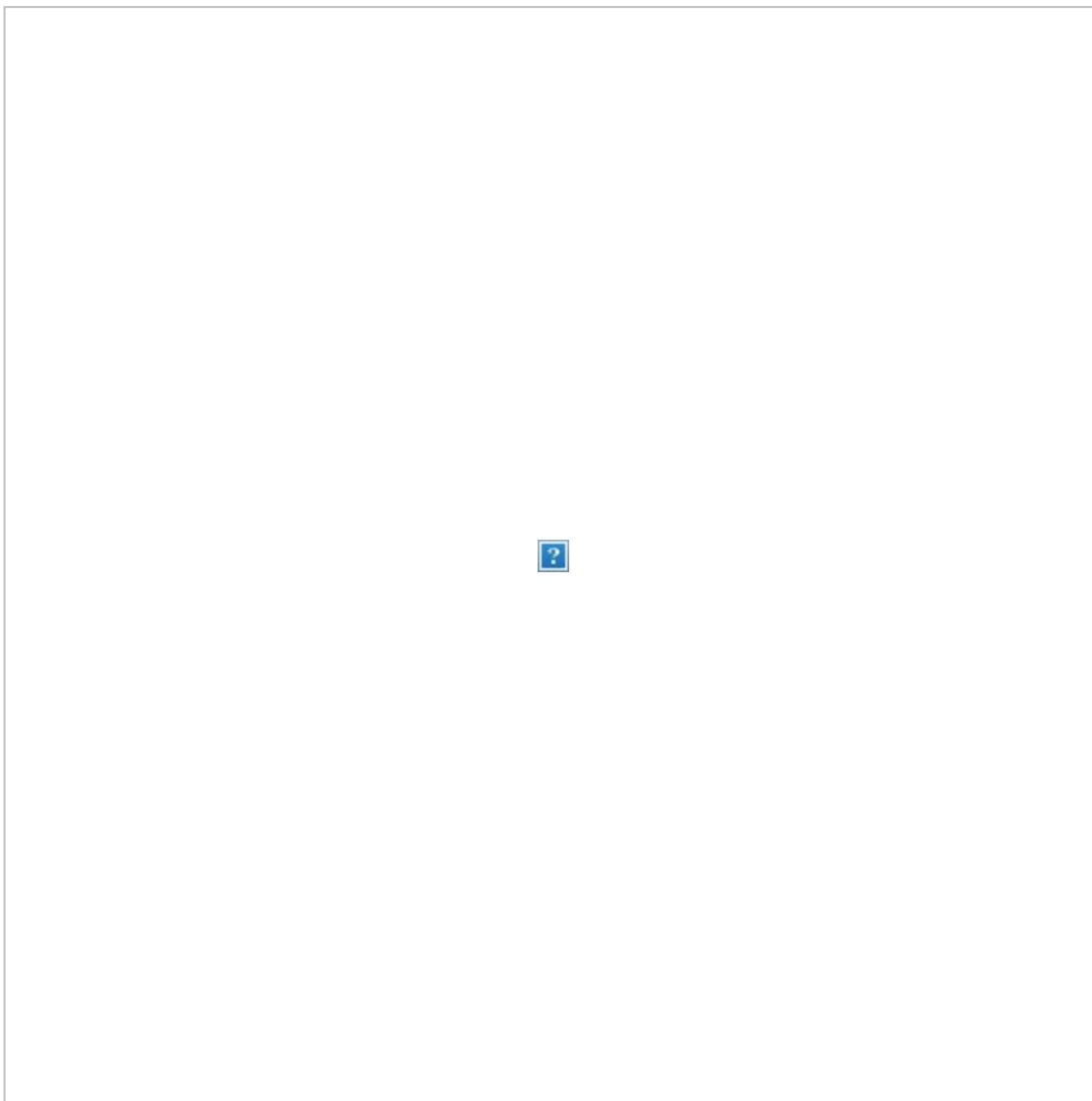
ACA Connects Pushes for Less Regulation, Faster BEAD

Deployment

The industry group laid out its 2025 broadband policy priorities under President Donald Trump.

By Jericho Casper • 31 Jan 2025

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Screenshot of Grant Spellmeyer, CEO of ACA Connects, from a video by Light Reading

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31, 2025 – Regulatory rollbacks, streamlined permitting, and reducing the regulatory hurdles that have slowed deployment of the \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and

Deployment program are the top priorities of ACA Connects with a new administration in power.

In an interview with Broadband Breakfast on the group's priorities for 2025, officials with the trade group representing independent broadband, video and communications providers outlined the group's concerns over broadband labels, and its support for deregulatory efforts that could reshape the industry. The group is led by CEO **Grant Spellmeyer**.

Senior Vice President of Legal and Regulatory Affairs **Brian Hurley** reaffirmed ACA Connects' support for BEAD; however, he criticized the Biden administration's implementation of the program, arguing that additional regulatory obligations, such as what he described as "rate regulation," as well as labor requirements, have slowed progress.

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"The program as it was implemented under the Biden administration had gotten off track, layering on additional obligations that are kind of unnecessary to achieve that mandate," Hurley said. "The first priority is just getting out from under onerous regulation and continuing to

foster an environment that promotes investment, especially for smaller companies.”

Welcoming a promised shift toward deregulation

ACA Connects anticipates a shift toward deregulation, which Hurley said he welcomed. He highlighted the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals decision to strike down the Federal Communications Commission’s net neutrality order was a win for its members.

ACA was closely watching another key legal battle over the FCC’s digital discrimination rule, which was currently awaiting a decision from the Eighth Circuit. Hurley expressed optimism that the court would overturn the rule based on oral arguments, saying that the FCC had exceeded its statutory authority. He also noted that if the rule were struck down, ACA Connects would work with the FCC to craft a more workable framework.

“The regulatory regime that the FCC put in place just vastly exceeds what Congress intended,” he said. “The way the FCC framework put in place [a company would be] second guessing every business decision, which is just untenable, especially for a smaller company. So we want to work with the FCC to find a kind of a better path forward, definitely.”

ACA Connects also wants to streamline requirements for so-called broadband “nutrition” labels, particularly for smaller providers that lack extensive compliance departments.

There could be ways to streamline the rules to reduce compliance burdens on smaller ISPs, Hurley said. Unless and until Congress repeals or amend the law, the FCC is obligated to maintain broadband

labeling requirements.

Additional regulatory concerns included:

- **All-In Pricing Rules:** the FCC's all-in pricing rules require broadband providers to display a single, upfront price inclusive of all mandatory fees. Hurley criticized these rules, suggesting they overreach the FCC's authority.
- **State-Level Rate Regulations:** He cited New York's law requiring \$15 broadband plans as a policy that could deter investment, warning that similar proposals in Massachusetts and Connecticut could further disrupt the industry.
- **Permitting Reform:** ACA Connects supports Rep. **Buddy Carter**, R-Georgia, American Broadband Deployment Act, which aims to streamline rights-of-way approvals and reduce bureaucratic barriers to broadband deployment.
- **Bulk Billing:** Hurley also pointed to FCC Commissioner **Brendan Carr**'s decision to pull the bulk billing item from circulation, which ACA Connects had opposed alongside various other groups.



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Carr Visits North Carolina In Hurricane Helene Aftermath

First official trip taken since Carr took over as FCC Chairman.



Comcast Introduces New 'Ultra-Low' Latency Internet Connectivity

Application will be implemented in Apple, Meta, Nvidia, and Valve technologies



FCC Probing NPR, PBS on Possible Ad Ban Violation

FCC Chairman Carr revealed probe in letter to head of both broadcasters.



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From: alerts=broadbandbreakfast.com@ghost.broadbandbreakfast.com on behalf of [Broadband Breakfast](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: BREAKING: BEAD Spending Safe from Energy Executive Order, White House Says
Date: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 1:25:23 PM

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ALERTS

**BREAKING: BEAD Spending Safe
from Energy Executive Order,**

White House Says

The White House issued a memo clarifying that a call to pause Infrastructure Act funding applied only to energy projects.

By Jake Neenan • 22 Jan 2025

[View in browser](#)



Photo of Donald Trump about to sign an executive orders in the Oval Office, Jan. 20, 2025, by Evan Vucci/AP

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22, 2024 – The Trump administration clarified Wednesday that an executive order directing agencies to pause Inflation Reduction and Infrastructure Act funding applies only to

certain energy projects, dispelling some fears of broadband deployment efforts being caught in a political crossfire.

“This pause only applies to funds supporting programs, projects, or activities that may be implicated by the policy established in Section 2 of the order,” **Matthew Vaeth**, acting director of the Office of Management and Budget, wrote [in a memo](#) posted Wednesday. That section of [the order](#) deals with energy production on federal land, electric vehicle policies, and household appliance manufacturing. It does not mention broadband.

Experts said the memo was a clear signal the \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program was not covered by the order’s call to pause funding. The order caused some speculation that all IIJA programs, including BEAD, could be held up by Trump’s policies.

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There were also signs from the lengthy order's focus on walking back clean energy provisions that BEAD wasn't the target.

"This executive order is about energy and natural resources. It only mentions the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act once, and it doesn't mention broadband at all," said **Drew Garner**, director of policy engagement at the Benton Institute for Broadband and Society. "This is not a broadband order."

Blair Levin, policy advisor at New Street Research and a former FCC chief of staff, said the memo confirmed a note he wrote to investors Wednesday morning.

"Given the context of the EO we don't think it applies to the BEAD program," he wrote. "Further, even if one thought it did, it does not apply to state activity."

That's not to say the program is totally out of the woods, Republicans have criticized several of its policies and some GOP lawmakers have expressed a desire to change certain rules related to project selection, like the preference for fiber, if they can.

Three states received federal approval on their BEAD spending plans, the last step before funding projects, in the final days of the Biden administration. They're expecting to get construction underway in the near future—within the next 100 days in the case of Louisiana. Nearly half have begun the process of fielding grant applications.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the agency managing BEAD, referred a request for comment to the Department of Commerce public affairs team, which did not respond

to requests for comment.



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FCC Chairman Carr Ends DEI within the Agency

Trump ordered an end to federal DEI programs.



Team Carr: New FCC Chairman Names His Senior Staff

Scott Delacourt will serve as FCC Chief of Staff and Greg Watson as Chief of Staff for Carr's office.



Trump Hosts Tech Titans at Press Conference Linking Energy and AI

'Stargate will be building the physical and virtual infrastructure to power the next generation of advancements in AI,'...



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To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: Equity on the Line: Telecom's DEI Dilemma
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 8:39:45 PM

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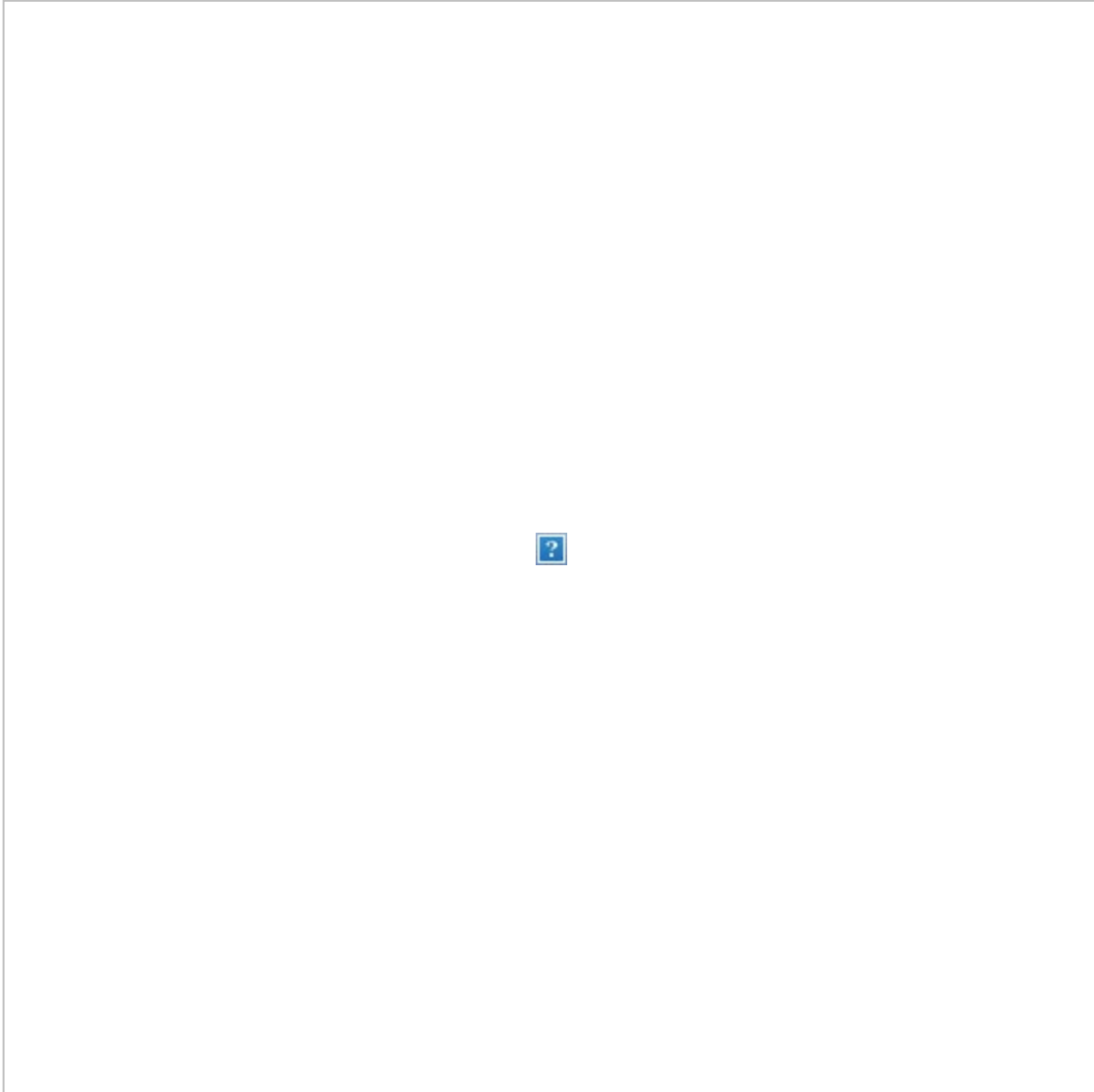
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Equity on the Line: Telecom's DEI Dilemma

FCC ends DEI priorities after Trump's executive order, leaving telecom's equity mandates in limbo.

By Jericho Casper • 28 Jan 2025

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Top left to bottom right: **Deborah Lathen**, president of Lathen Consulting; **Maurita Coley Flippin**, principal for MCF Global; **Brent Wilkes**, SVP of institutional development for the Hispanic Federation; and, **Clint Odom**, VP of strategic alliances and external affairs for T-Mobile.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 28, 2025 – Advocates for racial diversity and equity in the telecommunications industry expressed shock and confusion about how to reconcile recent Trump administration orders with longstanding practice and law.

Diversity, equity and inclusion were not just goals, but legal mandates for the telecommunications industry, experts said during a Federal Communications Bar Association session Tuesday.

The Trump White House issued [an executive order](#) on January 20 to eliminate DEI programs across federal agencies. This Inauguration Day directive, calling DEI efforts "illegal and immoral discrimination programs," came after major tech companies Meta, Amazon, and Apple had already [scaled back DEI initiatives](#).

But for industries like telecom, panelists warned that the rollback of DEI initiatives threatens decades of progress to ensure diversity in leadership and equity in communications.

The Communications Act puts telecom in a unique position

Several panelists pointed to the telecom sector's unique position. Principles of equity are grounded in foundational laws like the Communications Act of 1934 and the Communications Act of 1996, panelists said.

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For example, **Clint Odom**, vice president of strategic alliances and external affairs at T-Mobile, emphasized that DEI principles aren't just modern buzzwords but were deeply rooted in constitutional amendments – including the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 19th – and reinforced by law.

“It’s enshrined in the statute,” Odom emphasized, referring to the Communications Act. “We can’t read it out of existence — it is there.”

The Communications Act requires that telecommunications services be made available “so far as possible, to all people of the United States, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex.”

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 reaffirmed principles of equity by emphasizing universal access to telecommunications services, panelists said. And the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 explicitly prohibited digital discrimination – based on income, race, ethnicity, or geography – in the rollout of broadband infrastructure.

Rollback?

Yet, on January 21, FCC Chairman **Brendan Carr** announced sweeping changes to align the FCC with the Trump administration’s executive order to dismantle DEI initiatives across federal agencies.

In [a public statement](#), Carr declared the FCC’s intention to eliminate

DEI as a strategic priority, and to dismantle programs established under the Biden administration that aimed to ensure equitable access to communications services. Such an initiative would appear to include the FCC's digital discrimination rules, which [remains intact for now](#), although it is under review by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Carr's announcement included a detailed plan to rescind the FCC's 2022 Equity Action Plan, disband the Communications Equity and Diversity Council, and eliminate DEI priorities from the agency's strategic plans, budgets, performance plans, and advisory committee directives.

"Carr is going to walk a very, very difficult line here between what is required of him by law for the FCC and what is dictated to him from the White House," said **Deborah Lathen**, president of Lathen Consulting and former chief of the FCC's Cable Services Bureau.

Carr must navigate the political reality of serving under an administration that has openly criticized DEI as discriminatory and wasteful, she said. Yet, Carr's legal obligations as FCC chairman are rooted in law and policy emphasizing equity, access, and inclusivity in telecommunications.

Long-standing policies at the FCC

Additionally, the FCC has long pursued policies that promote diversity and inclusion. These include the FCC's Equal Employment Opportunity rules, which ensure that broadcast license holders comply with diverse hiring practices. Historical programs like the Minority Tax Certificate Program (1978-1995) and the Designated Entity Rules for Spectrum Auctions created pathways for minority- and women-owned businesses to participate in telecom ownership

and spectrum allocation.

Indeed, the panel’s conversations reflected a growing tension between the historical intent of DEI — ensuring equal opportunity and addressing systemic inequities — and what they called its increasingly politicized framing.

Panelists pointed to the Trump administration’s recent executive order as a pivotal moment, with its rhetoric labeling DEI initiatives as “woke” and “Marxist ideology.” The shift recasts equity and inclusion as controversial and even exclusionary.

Odom pointed to a stark contrast between today’s rhetoric and the Republican Party’s approach to diversity and inclusion in the past. He quoted former FCC Republican Chairman **Michael Powell**, who in 2003 said, “It is essential that we promote greater inclusiveness in our media and communications delivery sectors.”

“From the White House, to FCC commissioners, this has not historically been a controversial area of public policy,” Odom said. The Trump White House may force agencies like the FCC to reevaluate long-standing commitments.



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Judge Temporarily Blocks Trump Funding Freeze

A spreadsheet circulated by the OMB and attached to this story

showed thousands of programs up for review, including BE...



Carr Ends Biden-Era Plan For Broadband Environmental Regulations

Proposal would have required more environmental checks on cell tower construction.



Capito Secures \$18 Million Grant for Broadband In West Virginia

Rural broadband infrastructure projects to connect thousands.



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THE DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

January 27, 2025

M-25-13

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Matthew J. Vaeth, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget 

SUBJECT: Temporary Pause of Agency Grant, Loan, and Other Financial Assistance Programs

The American people elected Donald J. Trump to be President of the United States and gave him a mandate to increase the impact of every federal taxpayer dollar. In Fiscal Year 2024, of the nearly \$10 trillion that the Federal Government spent, more than \$3 trillion was Federal financial assistance, such as grants and loans. Career and political appointees in the Executive Branch have a duty to align Federal spending and action with the will of the American people as expressed through Presidential priorities. Financial assistance should be dedicated to advancing Administration priorities, focusing taxpayer dollars to advance a stronger and safer America, eliminating the financial burden of inflation for citizens, unleashing American energy and manufacturing, ending “wokeness” and the weaponization of government, promoting efficiency in government, and Making America Healthy Again. The use of Federal resources to advance Marxist equity, transgenderism, and green new deal social engineering policies is a waste of taxpayer dollars that does not improve the day-to-day lives of those we serve.

This memorandum requires Federal agencies to identify and review all Federal financial assistance¹ programs and supporting activities consistent with the President’s policies and requirements.² For example, during the initial days of his Administration, President Donald J. Trump issued a series of executive orders to protect the American people and safeguard valuable taxpayer resources, including *Protecting the American People Against Invasion* (Jan. 20, 2025), *Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid* (Jan. 20, 2025), *Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements* (Jan. 20, 2025), *Unleashing American Energy* (Jan. 20, 2025), *Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing* (Jan. 20,

¹ 2 CFR 200.1 defines Federal financial assistance to mean “[a]ssistance that recipients or subrecipients receive or administer” in various forms, but this term does not include assistance provided directly to individuals. For the purposes of this memorandum, Federal financial assistance includes: (i) all forms of assistance listed in paragraphs (1) and (2) of the definition of this term at 2 CFR 200.1; and (ii) assistance received or administered by recipients or subrecipients of any type except for assistance received directly by individuals.

² Nothing in this memo should be construed to impact Medicare or Social Security benefits.

2025), *Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government* (Jan. 20, 2025), and *Enforcing the Hyde Amendment* (Jan. 24, 2025). These executive orders ensure that Federal funds are used to support hardworking American families.

To implement these orders, each agency must complete a comprehensive analysis of all of their Federal financial assistance programs to identify programs, projects, and activities that may be implicated by any of the President's executive orders. In the interim, to the extent permissible under applicable law, Federal agencies **must temporarily pause** all activities related to obligation or disbursement of all Federal financial assistance, and other relevant agency activities that may be implicated by the executive orders, including, but not limited to, financial assistance for foreign aid, nongovernmental organizations, DEI, woke gender ideology, and the green new deal.

This temporary pause will provide the Administration time to review agency programs and determine the best uses of the funding for those programs consistent with the law and the President's priorities. The temporary pause will become effective on January 28, 2025, at 5:00 PM. Even before completing their comprehensive analysis, Federal agencies must immediately identify any legally mandated actions or deadlines for assistance programs arising while the pause remains in effect. Federal agencies must report this information to OMB along with an analysis of the requirement. OMB also directs Federal agencies to pause all activities associated with open NOFOs, such as conducting merit review panels.

No later than February 10, 2025, agencies shall submit to OMB detailed information on any programs, projects or activities subject to this pause. Each agency must pause: (i) issuance of new awards; (ii) disbursement of Federal funds under all open awards; and (iii) other relevant agency actions that may be implicated by the executive orders, to the extent permissible by law, until OMB has reviewed and provided guidance to your agency with respect to the information submitted.

OMB may grant exceptions allowing Federal agencies to issue new awards or take other actions on a case-by-case basis. To the extent required by law, Federal agencies may continue taking certain administrative actions, such as closeout of Federal awards (2 CFR 200.344), or recording obligations expressly required by law.

Additionally, agencies must, for each Federal financial assistance program: (i) assign responsibility and oversight to a senior political appointee to ensure Federal financial assistance conforms to Administration priorities; (ii) review currently pending Federal financial assistance announcements to ensure Administration priorities are addressed, and, subject to program statutory authority, modify unpublished Federal financial assistance announcements, withdraw any announcements already published, and, to the extent permissible by law, cancel awards already awarded that are in conflict with Administration priorities, and; (iii) ensure adequate oversight of Federal financial assistance programs and initiate investigations when warranted to identify underperforming recipients, and address identified issues up to and including cancellation of awards.

From: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
To: [Christine Hallquist](#)
Subject: FW: EO
Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 12:36:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: Monsarrat, Alexei <Alexei.Monsarrat@vermont.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 10:22 AM
To: Purvis, Clay <clpurvis@ntia.gov>; Lader, Wendy <wlader@ntia.gov>
Cc: Wade, Jen <jen.wade@rsmus.com>; Reyes, Jill <jill.reyes@rsmus.com>; Bender, Maggie <maggie.bender@rsmus.com>; Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>; Clithero, Toni H <Toni.Clithero@vermont.gov>; Matthews, Alissa <Alissa.Matthews@vermont.gov>; Sweet, Kristina (she/her) <Kristina.Sweet@vermont.gov>; Aguayo, Jose <Jose.Aguayo@vermont.gov>
Subject: FW: EO

Hi, Clay and Wendy: I know it must be a very busy day, but we'd be grateful for any clarity about whether this segment of the EO applies to BEAD, and whether BEAD will be subject to the 90 day program review. Best, Alexei

From: Wade, Jen <Jen.Wade@rsmus.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 10:11 AM
To: Monsarrat, Alexei <Alexei.Monsarrat@vermont.gov>
Cc: Bender, Maggie <maggie.bender@rsmus.com>; Reyes, Jill <jill.reyes@rsmus.com>
Subject: EO

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Per our discussion. This is related to energy, but we sent this over to NTIA to confirm due to the mention of IJJA.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/unleashing-american-energy/>

Sec. 7. Terminating the Green New Deal. (a) **All agencies shall immediately pause the disbursement of funds appropriated through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-169) or the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58)**, including but not limited to funds for electric vehicle charging stations made available through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program and the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program, and shall review their processes, policies, and programs for issuing grants, loans, contracts, or any other financial disbursements of such appropriated funds for consistency with the law and the policy outlined in section 2 of this order. Within 90 days of the date of this order, all agency heads shall submit a report to the Director of the NEC and Director of OMB that details the findings of this review, including recommendations to enhance their alignment with the policy set forth in section 2. **No funds identified in this subsection (a) shall be disbursed by a given agency until the Director of OMB and Assistant to the President for Economic Policy have determined that such disbursements are consistent with any review recommendations they have chosen to adopt.**

Best,

Jen Wade
Director
Process, Risk & Controls
Public Sector

RSM US LLP
One Atlantic Center | 1201 West Peachtree St. NW, Suite 800 | Atlanta, GA 30309,
D: 404.751.9226 | **E:** jen.wade@rsmus.com | **W:** www.rsmus.com



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From: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
To: [Li, Yujie](#); [Herzog, Herry](#); [Matthews, Alissa](#)
Subject: FW: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation
Date: Friday, January 24, 2025 11:02:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

FYI

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: Hallquist, Christine
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 11:01 AM
To: Sweet, Kristina (she/her) <Kristina.Sweet@vermont.gov>; Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>
Cc: Ledoux, JB <JB.Ledoux@vermont.gov>; Watson, Britaney <Britaney.Watson@vermont.gov>
Subject: RE: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation

Will,

Here is a note that I sent to Kerrick Johnson today. I will send it to the entire staff of the Governor next week. I am frustrated.

We are pretty frustrated with the Governor and his staff in their lack of responsiveness to the VCBB. It is now going on over three months since we received the notification and request from the NTIA to accept the grant. The Governor want to wait till we had a grant agreement. It has been over a month since we sent the grant agreement for the Digital Equity program to his office and we have been pinging the staff weekly. We are on a tight 9 month schedule and are losing time as we cannot engage our contractors until the Governor signs acceptance of the \$5.3 million grant. We send emails through Will Anderson and do not get a response. We are now at the point where further delay may cause us to miss our commitments to the

NTIA which puts Vermont at risk for claw-back.

We also have not been getting any response for re-appointment of Dan Nelson and Patty Richards. Their term ends February 1. We will have to call off the February Board meeting if the Governor does not re-appoint them by the first week of February. We first reached out on 12/10 to Britney Wilson who CC'd Tracy Ennis as the Governor's Appointment Manager, We didn't hear back so I followed up again on January 2nd, WE received a response from Tracy late in the day on January 6, We responded the next morning and January 21 and have heard nothing since.

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: Sweet, Kristina (she/her) <Kristina.Sweet@vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2025 11:56 AM
To: Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>
Cc: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>; Ledoux, JB <JB.Ledoux@vermont.gov>;
Watson, Britaney <Britaney.Watson@vermont.gov>
Subject: RE: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation
Importance: High

Hi Will,

Can you let us know where we are in the process with state acceptance of this grant?
We have a lot of working happening under the program and need to begin drawing down funds as soon as possible. Thank you!

Best,
Kristina

Kristina Sweet (she/her) | Director of Regulatory Compliance & Risk Management
Vermont Community Broadband Board, Department of Public Service
112 State Street | Montpelier, VT 05620
802-461-7635
publicservice.vermont.gov

Check out our award-winning documentary, "[Connected](#)."

From: Sweet, Kristina (she/her)

Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2025 10:14 AM

To: Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>

Cc: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>; Ledoux, JB <JB.Ledoux@vermont.gov>;

Watson, Britaney <Britaney.Watson@vermont.gov>

Subject: RE: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation

Hi Will,

I hope you're well! Just following up to see where we're at with state acceptance of this grant. Thanks!

Best,
Kristina

Kristina Sweet (she/her) | Director of Regulatory Compliance & Risk Management
Vermont Community Broadband Board, Department of Public Service
112 State Street | Montpelier, VT 05620
802-461-7635
publicservice.vermont.gov

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From: Sweet, Kristina (she/her)

Sent: Friday, January 10, 2025 10:07 AM

To: Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>

Cc: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>; Ledoux, JB <JB.Ledoux@vermont.gov>;

Watson, Britaney <Britaney.Watson@vermont.gov>

Subject: RE: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation

Hi Will,

Happy New Year! Can you let us know where our state acceptance package is at the moment? Thanks for your help in this process!

Best,
Kristina

Kristina Sweet (she/her) | Director of Regulatory Compliance & Risk Management
Vermont Community Broadband Board, Department of Public Service
112 State Street | Montpelier, VT 05620

802-461-7635

publicservice.vermont.gov

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From: Sweet, Kristina (she/her)

Sent: Monday, December 23, 2024 12:21 PM

To: Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>

Subject: RE: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation

Hi Will,

Please find the signed Digital Equity Capacity Grant award attached. Let me know if you need anything else from us for the Governor's office. Thanks and hope you're having a great holiday season!

Best,
Kristina

Kristina Sweet (she/her) | Director of Regulatory Compliance & Risk Management
Vermont Community Broadband Board, Department of Public Service
112 State Street | Montpelier, VT 05620
802-461-7635
publicservice.vermont.gov

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From: Sweet, Kristina (she/her)

Sent: Friday, December 20, 2024 12:06 PM

To: Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>

Subject: RE: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation

Hi Will,

Here's the latest update from NIST/NTIA on our pending award. I have attached the Federal Assistance Information Sheet notifying us of the pending award. Hope you're having a great holiday season. Thanks!

Best,
Kristina

Kristina Sweet (she/her) | Director of Regulatory Compliance & Risk Management
Vermont Community Broadband Board, Department of Public Service
112 State Street | Montpelier, VT 05620

802-461-7635

publicservice.vermont.gov

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From: Sweet, Kristina (she/her)

Sent: Friday, December 13, 2024 8:38 AM

To: Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>

Subject: RE: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation

Hi Will,

We have not—I will follow up with NTIA/NIST today. Thanks!

Best,
Kristina

Kristina Sweet (she/her) | Director of Regulatory Compliance & Risk Management
Vermont Community Broadband Board, Department of Public Service
112 State Street | Montpelier, VT 05620
802-461-7635
publicservice.vermont.gov

Check out our award-winning documentary, "[Connected](#)."

From: Anderson, Will <Will.Anderson@vermont.gov>

Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2024 12:33 PM

To: Sweet, Kristina (she/her) <Kristina.Sweet@vermont.gov>

Subject: Question on State Digital Equity Capacity grant documentation

Kristina,

Has the VCBB received any official award notification for the State Digital Equity Capacity grant from the NTIA?

I have the email notification and the press release, but the Governor's office would like to see an official document.

Thanks,
Will

Will Anderson
Budget and Management Analyst
Finance and Management

109 State Street 5th Floor
Montpelier, VT 05609
(802)-522-8756

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From: [Christine Hallquist](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: Fwd: HOLY \$@#&! All BEAD FUNDING has been FROZEN by TRUMP ADMIN!!!
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 1:28:41 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: The Broadband Community <no-reply@notification.circle.so>
Date: Tue, Jan 28, 2025, 12:54 PM
Subject: HOLY \$@#&! All BEAD FUNDING has been FROZEN by TRUMP ADMIN!!!
To: <christinehallquist@gmail.com>

HOLY \$@#&! All BEAD FUNDING has been FROZEN by TRUMP ADMIN!!!



Carl Franzen

Posted in Announcements

Per the bombshell note just sent out by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), a division of the White House that oversees the federal budget, all federal assistance programs, loans, and grant ...

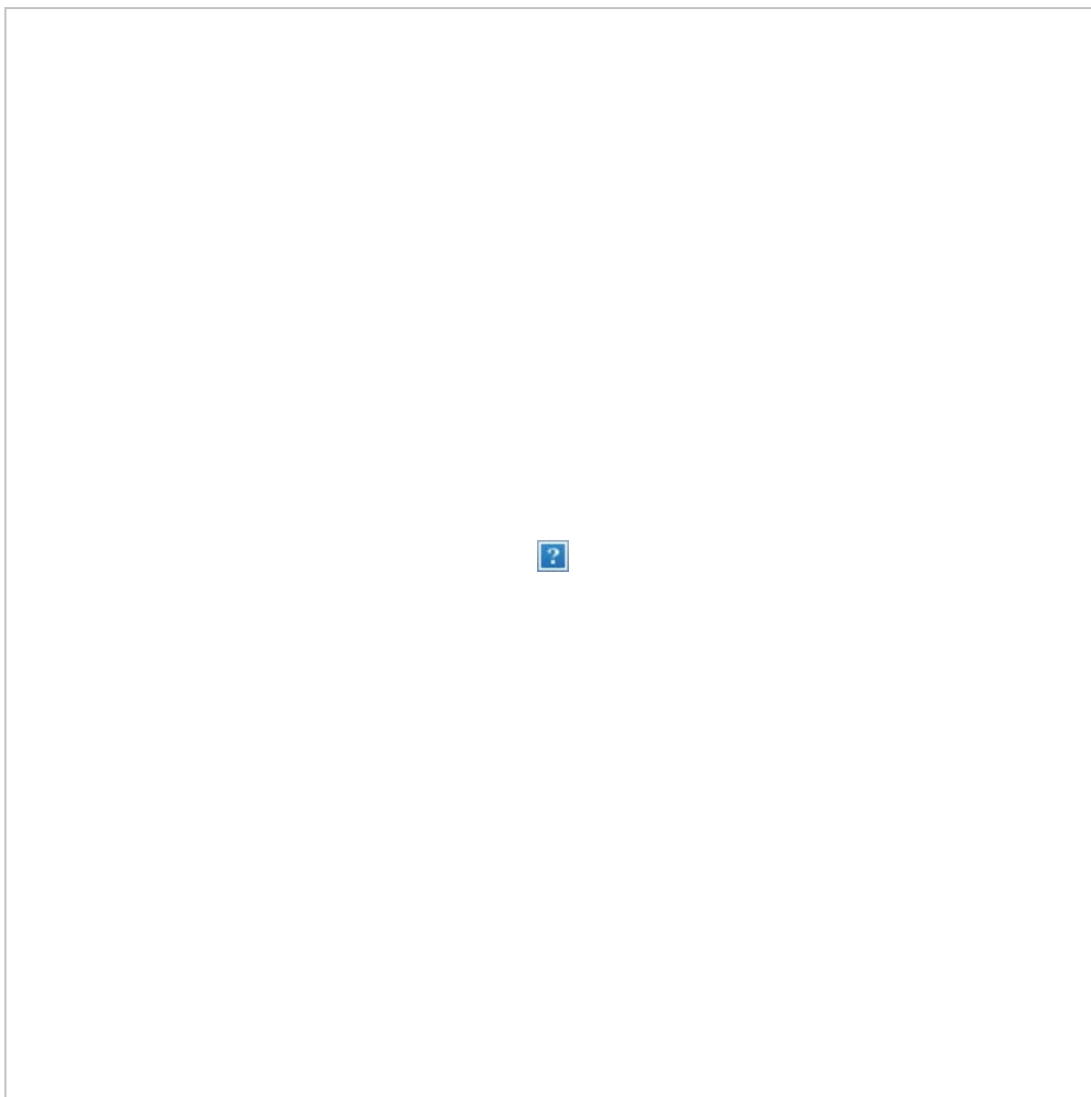
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From: alerts=broadbandbreakfast.com@ghost.broadbandbreakfast.com on behalf of [Broadband Breakfast](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: Louisiana Gov. Wants BEAD Flexibility, Keep Fiber Priority
Date: Thursday, January 23, 2025 7:14:20 PM

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ALERTS

**Louisiana Gov. Wants BEAD
Flexibility, Keep Fiber Priority**

The GOP governor's state, the first to get funding, wants easier funding for satellite and wireless.

By Jake Neenan • 23 Jan 2025

[View in browser](#)

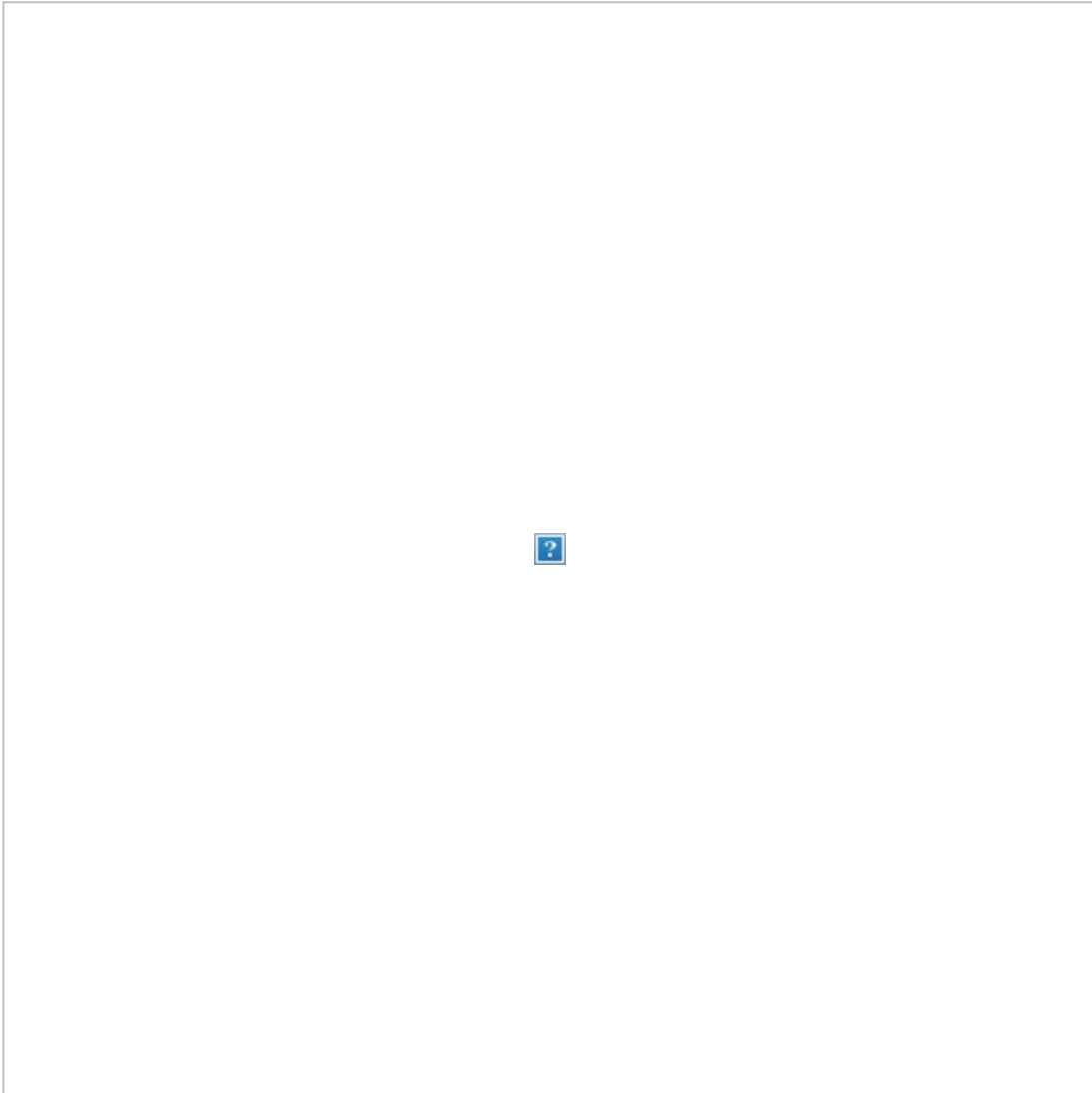
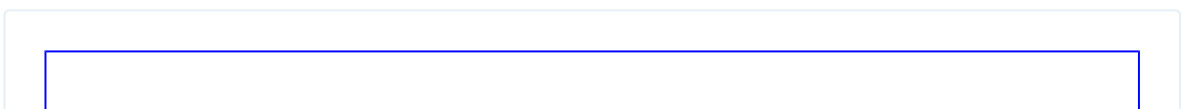


Photo of Louisiana Governor **Jeff Landry** from his office

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23, 2025 – Louisiana Governor **Jeff Landry** has some thoughts on how the Trump administration should update a \$42.5 billion effort to deploy broadband throughout the nation.





Landry Letter to Lutnick

Since the start of my administration, we have made it a priority to eliminate the digital divide in Louisiana. Ensuring access to high-quality broadband statewide, including across the rural areas of our state that have been too often left behind, is truly of vital importance in our state.

Available to Breakfast Club Members

There's been a lot of anticipation around how the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program might be altered with the GOP trifecta: Control over the presidency, the House and the Senate. Republicans have made it known they don't like the program's

preference for fiber, among other things, but it hasn't been clear precisely what they might pursue.

On Thursday, Landry released a letter to **Howard Lutnick**, Trump's pick to head the Commerce Department, that the agency should ditch the "alternative technology" designation currently given to low-earth orbit satellite and unlicensed fixed wireless broadband under the program due to capacity and interference concerns from the and classify them as "reliable broadband services."

As a Broadband Breakfast Club Member, you have *unlimited access* to topical and relevant news on high-speed internet connectivity. Don't miss our on-the-ground coverage of changes in Washington – and how they impact the states and communities in the U.S.

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That would effectively make it easier to fund the technologies without reversing the priority given to fiber. Fiber is capable of higher speeds that proponents argue make it a more permanent solution, but it's more expensive and time-consuming to deploy.

"We would greatly appreciate having the opportunity to serve as a thought partner and sounding board as you make necessary reforms

to NTIA and the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program,” Landry wrote.

Under current rules, fiber gets priority. If an ISP applies for grant funding to serve a location with fiber, it gets first dibs by default. If there’s no interest from a fiber provider, or it would be too expensive, states can look to cable or licensed fixed wireless. Only if that also falls short—and if it turns out unlicensed fixed wireless, not initially counted in BEAD maps, is absent in the area—can states fund an alternative technology.

States can choose the per-location price at which they start to look beyond fiber. Landry said the Trump administration should allow states to set that threshold before fielding applications. States, including Louisiana, largely elected not to do this, opting to set the threshold after receiving an initial set of applications. It’s possible the Biden NTIA, which had to sign off on those proposals, pushed for the move, but states wrote at the time that setting a threshold publicly before reviewing applications might dissuade some ISPs.

Landry also pushed for higher prices for the low-cost service option mandated by the program. States can set these as they wish, and they range from around \$30 to \$75 per month for low-income subscribers on BEAD infrastructure. ISPs have pushed the NTIA to move to increase that, arguing it’s unworkably low in some places.

The Louisiana Governor also called for nixing several reporting requirements and committing the NTIA to certain timelines to expedite federal approvals.

Three states, including Louisiana, received the green light to begin funding projects in the final days of the Biden administration. About half have started fielding grant applications.

The Biden NTIA administrator, **Alan Davidson**, stepped down on Monday, and his successor hasn't been officially named, but it's widely rumored to be **Arielle Roth**, the communications policy director for Sen. **Ted Cruz**, R-Texas. **Blair Levin**, former FCC chief of staff and policy advisor for New Street Research, called the possibility "likely" in an investor note Wednesday.

That's significant, Levin said, because Cruz sent a letter in November calling on NTIA to pause work on BEAD and outlining various criticisms of the program, including the fiber preference, low-cost plans, and high per-location costs.

Levin said investors should watch the last one most closely, as the NTIA moving to lower those high-cost thresholds would be its most direct way to shift BEAD dollars from fiber to fixed wireless and satellite.

"We stand by our earlier discussion of the likely changes in the program that the changes will be negative for terrestrial wireline and positive for satellite broadband," Levin wrote. "However, we need to learn the actual details before we can have conviction on the materiality of the changes."



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KEEP READING

Massachusetts Awards \$12.6 Million in Broadband Grants to Comcast, Verizon

Funds will improve Internet access in 96 cities in the Commonwealth



Dems Want Auction Authority Out of Reconciliation as Allen Reintroduces Spectrum Bil

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, is pushing to include FCC auction authority in the budget reconciliation bill.



OTI to Carr: Move Forward with 60-Day Unlocking Mandate

An unlocking rule would likely pass unanimously.



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From: alerts=broadbandbreakfast.com@ghost.broadbandbreakfast.com on behalf of [Broadband Breakfast](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: NTIA Nominee Roth Has Big Issues with BEAD
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 1:16:23 PM

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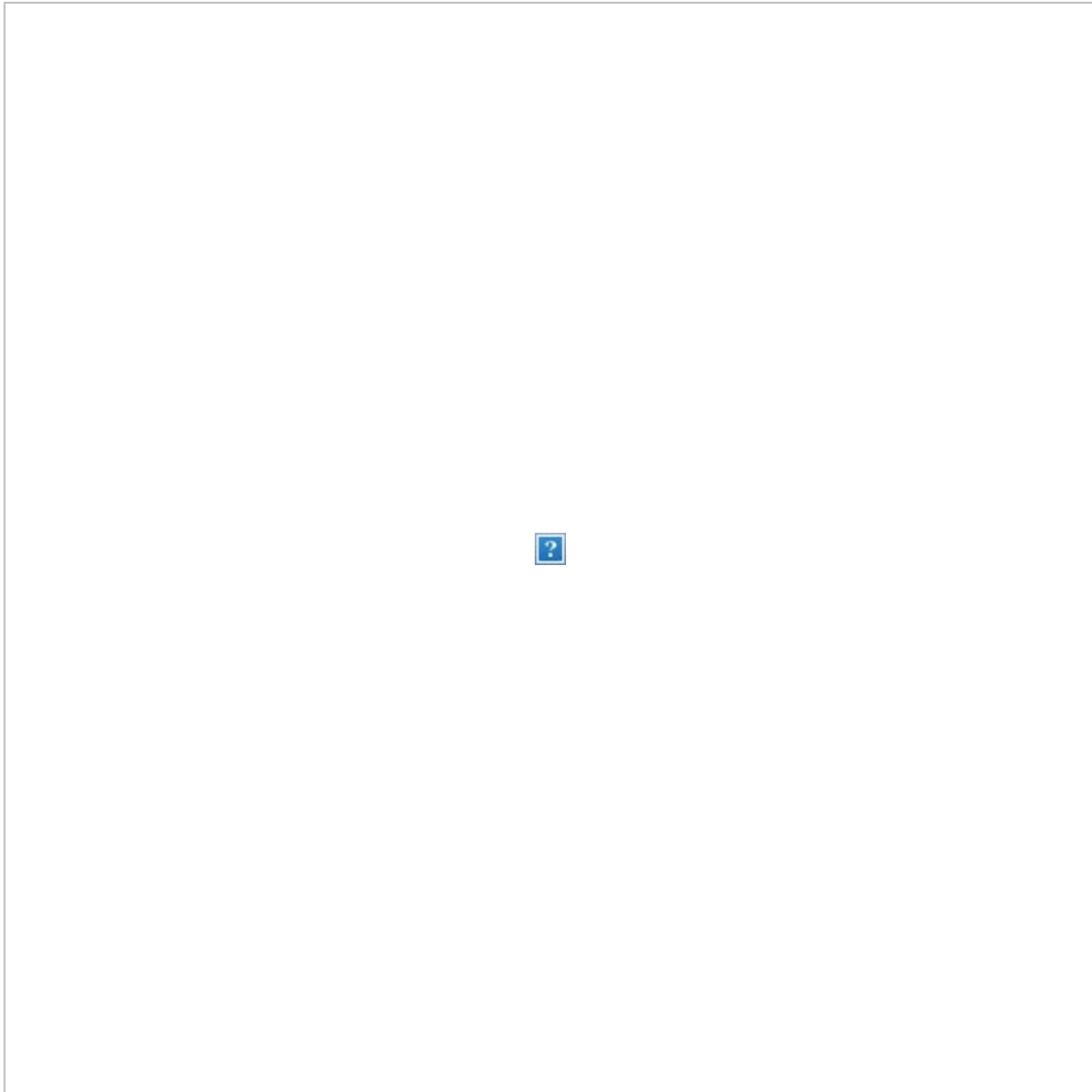
ALERTS

NTIA Nominee Roth Has Big Issues with BEAD

Incoming NTIA chief Arielle Roth would abolish fiber preference, low-cost mandates.

By Jericho Casper • 4 Feb 2025

[View in browser](#)



Screenshot of Arielle Roth, nominated to head NTIA in the Commerce Department.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4, 2025 – President **Donald Trump** on Monday nominated **Arielle Roth**, telecom director for Senate Commerce Committee chairman **Ted Cruz**, to lead the Commerce Department’s telecommunications agency.

Roth, who is poised to lead the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, outlined her stance on the \$42.5 billion Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment program in June, criticizing its emphasis on fiber deployments and what she described as a “woke social agenda” laden with additional regulatory burdens.

“The NTIA has just been preoccupied with attaching all kinds of extra legal requirements on BEAD and, you know, honest to honest, a woke social agenda, loading up all kinds of burdens that deter participation in the program and drive up costs,” Roth said, speaking at a [Federalist Society event](#).

Roth outlined several BEAD policies she opposed, stating: “Requiring states to choose a statewide low-cost, low-income rate is just one of the ways that they've imposed extra legal requirements. There's also climate change regulations, union mandates, wholesale access requirements... all kinds of left-wing priorities on the program that just divert resources away from the overall goal of closing broadband gaps. This is going to make the program less cost effective, and it's going to undermine its goals.”

She also took aim at NTIA’s strong preference for fiber in the BEAD program, arguing that it violates Congress’ intent of technology neutrality in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.

“Congress wrote the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act] in a tech-neutral manner,” Roth said. “Any technology could be eligible for BEAD subsidies provided that they met the performance requirements in the statute.”

“Instead, NTIA has gone in a totally different direction and imposed extreme tech bias in favor of fiber. That's just going to make the program more expensive. A one size fits all solution doesn't make

sense.”

Outside of BEAD and NTIA’s jurisdiction, Roth weighed in on broader telecom policy issues, including Universal Service Fund reform, digital discrimination rules, and Federal Communications Commission’s programs.

Roth said the Universal Service Fund “needs reform” and described the USF contribution factor – which [has risen to 36.3%](#) – as “unsustainable” and a “hidden tax on consumers’ phone bills.”

She rejected the idea of expanding the USF funding base [to include broadband providers or other industries](#), arguing that it wouldn’t fix the root problem of “constantly expanding spending” but would instead “open the floodgates” to more government expansion.

She supported Cruz’s “blueprint” for USF reform, which calls for [Congress to take over USF funding](#) through appropriations. “In the long run, that’s the only way to fix the USF, not just pumping more money into it,” Roth said.

She also raised concerns about the FCC’s digital discrimination rules, [currently tied up](#) in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, and voiced opposition to the expansion of the E-Rate program under former FCC chairwoman **Jessica Rosenworcel**, which included new money [to fund Wi-Fi on school buses](#) and [hotspot lending programs](#).

Roth’s self-proclaimed goal of slashing “red tape” and ensuring technology neutrality have earned her widespread praise from industry groups, many of which see her nomination as an opportunity to reshape broadband and spectrum policy.

Industry groups INCOMPAS, WISPA, WIA, ACA Connects, along with

AT&T, Comcast, and the National Spectrum Consortium were among those issuing statements congratulating Roth.

WISPA in particular framed Roth as a leader who could course-correct BEAD, making it more tech-neutral and removing what they view as unnecessary requirements that limit participation and drive up costs.

Roth's confirmation hearing has not yet been scheduled, but the Senate Commerce Committee was expected to announce a date in the coming weeks. The committee was set to hold [a vote on Feb. 5](#) for **Howard Lutnick**, Trump's nominee for Commerce Secretary, suggesting that Roth's hearing could be scheduled sometime after that session.



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KEEP READING

Ted Cruz Staffer Arielle Roth Named to Head NTIA, Cruz Tweets

If confirmed, Roth would head the Commerce Department agency charged with implementing a \$42.5 billion broadband progra...



Senate Confirms Energy Executive Chris Wright as Cabinet Secretary

Wright called for stewardship of oil, natural gas and coal, but also nuclear power, hydropower, wind, solar and geothe...



Elon Musk Tightens Grip on Federal Government as

Democrats Raise Alarms

Musk has created an alternative power structure inside the federal government for the purpose of cutting spending and p...



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From: news=broadbandbreakfast.com@ghost.broadbandbreakfast.com on behalf of [Broadband Breakfast](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: OMB Funding Freeze Makes More Uncertainty for BEAD
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 2:16:33 PM

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BEAD

[Funding Freeze Makes More Uncertainty for
BEAD](#)



WASHINGTON, Jan. 28, 2025 – Most observers reviewing the White House memo directing executive agencies to pause federal grant spending for 13 days, or until Feb. 10, believe that the \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment grant program is covered by the pause.

But one analyst said that states with already approved broadband spending plans – Louisiana, Nevada and Delaware – should be safe to spend without a pause.

On Monday night, the White House circulated a memo directing executive agencies to pause federal grant spending until Feb. 10. “To the extent permissible under applicable law, Federal agencies must temporarily pause all activities related to obligation or disbursement of all Federal financial assistance,” read the memo, authored by Matthew Vaeth, acting director of the Office of Management and Budget.

[At Least 11 Baltic Cables Have Been Damaged in 15 Months](#)

The NATO alliance is ratcheting up its guard against suspected attempts

to sabotage underwater data and energy cables.

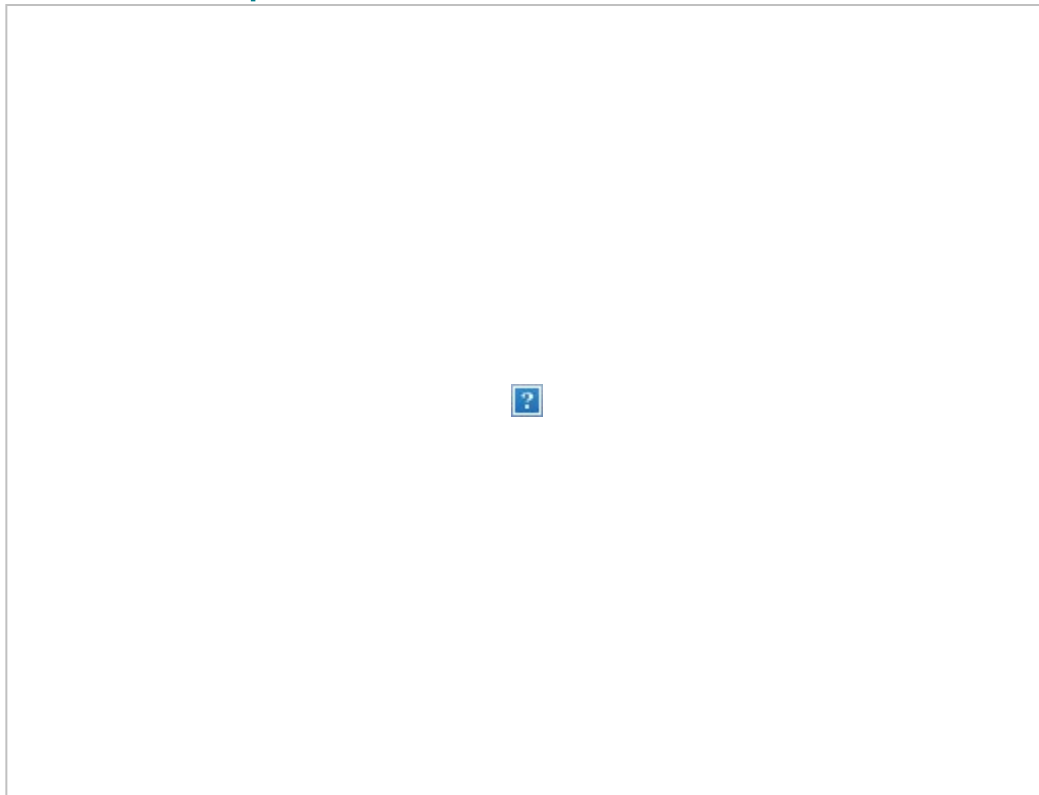
[USTelecom CEO to Trump: Copper Networks Looking for Parts on eBay](#)

Spalter wants Big Tech to support USF and seeks end to permitting delays.



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMISSION

[Sen. Cruz Leads GOP Effort to Block FCC's Wi-Fi Hotspots Order](#)



WASHINGTON, Jan. 27, 2025 – Senate Commerce Chairman **Ted Cruz**, R-Texas, was joined by 12 other committee Republican senators Monday to challenge the Federal Communications Commission's Wi-Fi Hotspot Order instated under the Biden Administration.

Taking down the rule by using the Congressional Review Act would “nullify a partisan FCC order that violates federal law, creates major risks for kids’ online safety, harms parental rights, and will increase taxes on working families,” a Committee [press release](#) said.

[Brendan Carr Withdraws FCC's Bulk Billing Proposal](#)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27, 2025 – That's one down.

Federal Communications Commission Chairman **Brendan Carr** removed from circulation last week an item that would have sought comment on banning bulk billing arrangements between landlords and broadband providers.

Carr is expected to roll back or not enforce a number of consumer protection rules pursued by the Biden FCC. The bulk billing proposal was never made public but was circulated among staff by **Jessica Rosenworcel**, the Biden FCC chairwoman, in March 2024.

[Former FCC Commissioner O'Rielly Working on USF 'Patch'](#)

Supreme Court to rule later this year if USF's funding mechanism is unconstitutional.

BROADBAND LIVE

[Broadband Breakfast on January 29, 2025 - The 'Little Tech' Agenda](#)

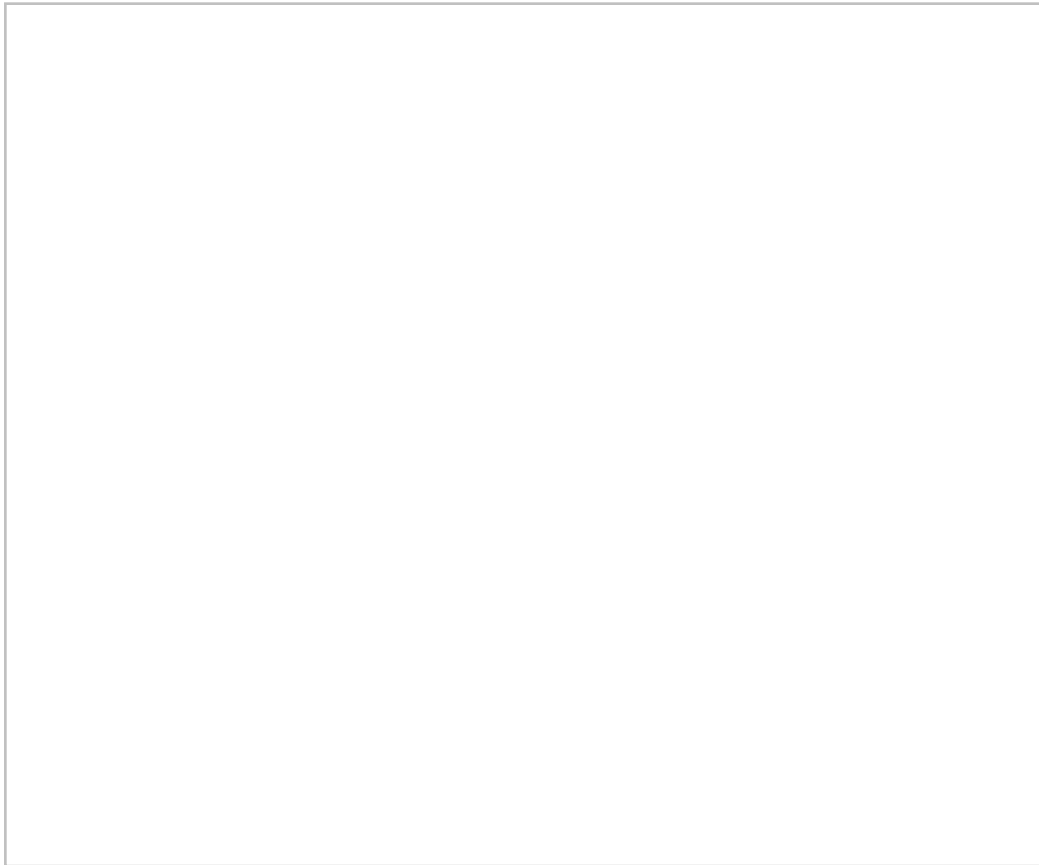


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[A single blog post](#) in July 2024 helped reshape the political landscape of tech and innovation in American politics. ["The Little Tech Agenda."](#) penned by Silicon Valley veterans **Marc Andreessen** and **Ben Horowitz**, created an unexpected bridge between the tech hub's innovation culture and Trump's political resurgence. What began as a modest proposal for startup-friendly regulations and cryptocurrency innovation became a catalyst for a broader tech-political realignment, drawing prominent venture capitalists and tech leaders into Trump's orbit. Can this alliance between Silicon Valley disruptors and Trump's political movement survive the realities of governing? Will the "techno-optimist" vision outlined in the agenda translate into effective policy? And what does this shift mean for the future of American innovation and tech regulation?

Panelists

- **Gary Shapiro**, CEO, Consumer Technology Association
- **Will Rinehart**, Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute
- *Other panelists have been invited*
- **Drew Clark** (moderator), CEO and Publisher, Broadband Breakfast



Gary Shapiro is an acclaimed author, speaker, CEO and Vice Chair of the Consumer Technology Association which represents over 1200 consumer technology companies and owns and produces CES — the most powerful tech event in the world. In his 30-years plus heading CTA, Shapiro expanded the association’s influence and impact alongside the growth of the technology industry. Shapiro is active in policy, thought leadership, government, and community development alongside his position at CTA.

Will Rinehart is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), where he focuses on the political economy of technology and innovation. His research covers policy areas such as diagnostic testing regulation, federal agency regulatory guidance, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the regulation of artificial intelligence. He also serves as an expert at the Federalist Society’s Emerging Technology Working Group, which is part of the Regulatory Transparency Project.



BEAD

[BEAD Applicants Urged to Think Beyond End Users for Revenue](#)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27, 2025 – As \$42.5 billion in federal funding flows into broadband network deployment through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program, telecom strategists emphasized the need for applicants to think beyond network construction.

[New Mexico's Proposed Broadband Satellite Program is a Blessing From Above](#)

Becoming part of the online community will mean access to healthcare, educational opportunities and local job growth.

[ISPs Press Supreme Court to Reconsider N.Y. Internet Affordability Law](#)

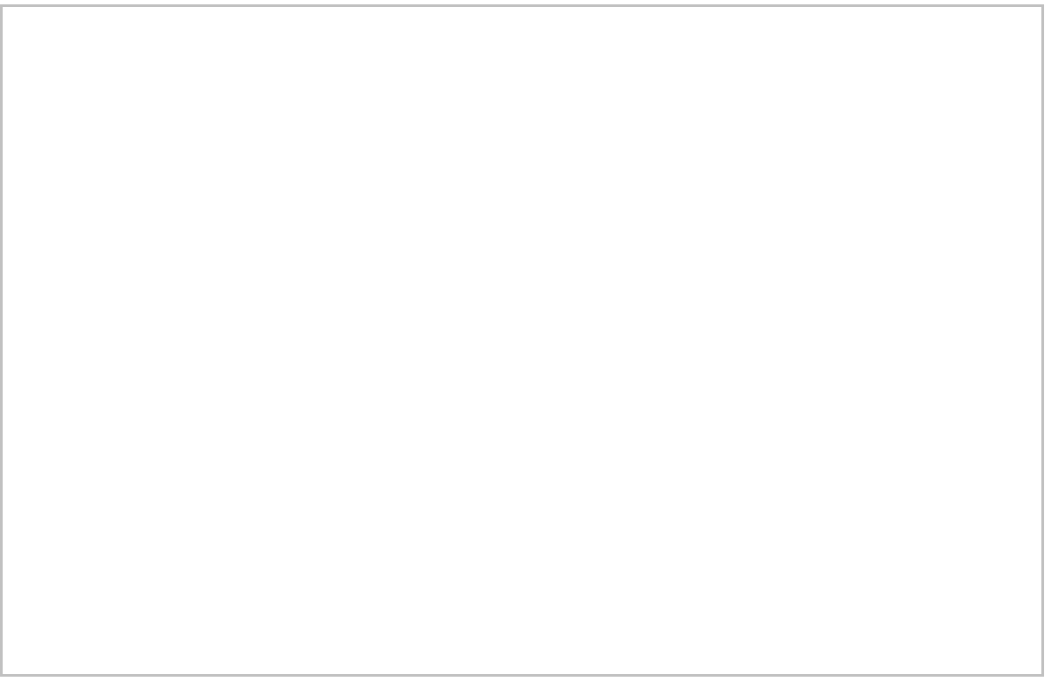
In a rare Supreme Court rehearing bid, ISPs argued the law was causing harm.

[Texas Awards \\$424.6 million in Broadband Deployment Grants](#)

Most of the grants will fund fiber projects.

BROADBAND LIVE

[Broadband Breakfast on February 5, 2025 - Next Steps for Spectrum Auction Renewal](#)



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The Federal Communications Commission [enters its third year without spectrum auction authority](#), marking an unprecedented pause in its decades-long role of managing America's airwaves. At stake is the future of 5G deployment and potential spectrum sharing with military radar systems. As incoming FCC Chairman **Brendan Carr** prepares to take the helm, and Republican lawmakers consider attaching auction authority to budget reconciliation, key questions emerge: Can bipartisan agreement be reached on auction terms and federal spectrum sharing? Will the FCC find alternative ways to manage spectrum without auction authority? And how will this regulatory limbo affect America's wireless future?

Panelists

- **Michael Calabrese**, director of the Wireless Future Project, New America's Open Technology Institute
- **Jennifer McCarthy**, telecommunications regulatory attorney
- *Other panelists have been invited*
- **Drew Clark** (moderator), CEO and Publisher, Broadband Breakfast



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

What is DeepSeek, the Chinese AI Company Upending the Stock Market?

Behind the drama over DeepSeek's technical capabilities is a debate within the U.S. over how best to compete with China on AI.

AT&T to Start Copper Retirement Process at 25 Percent of Wire Centers

CEO John Stankey said the company will submit necessary FCC filings in the coming weeks.

Can Big Tech Plug Data Centers Right Into Power Plants?

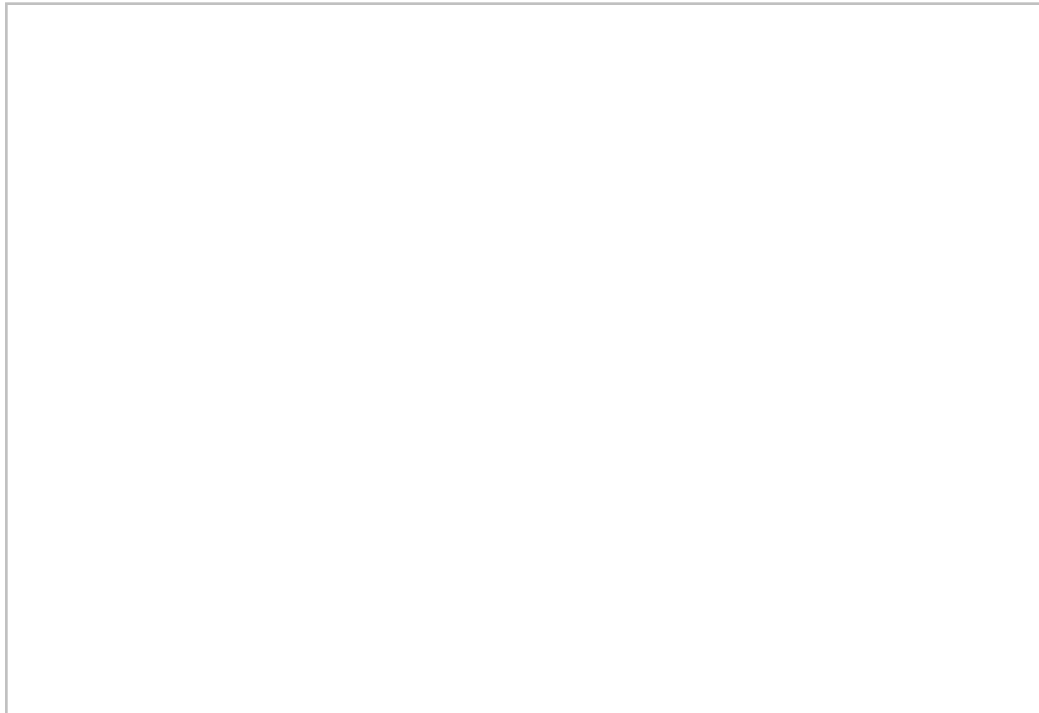
Amazon Web Services is building next to the Susquehanna nuclear plant in eastern Pennsylvania. Utilities say that's not fair.

Trump Touts Coal as an Answer to AI Power Needs

But any boost for fossil fuels could be short-lived, given needs for Artificial Intelligence.

THE 12 DAYS OF BROADBAND

The 'Little Tech Agenda' Becomes a Manifesto for Trump 2.0



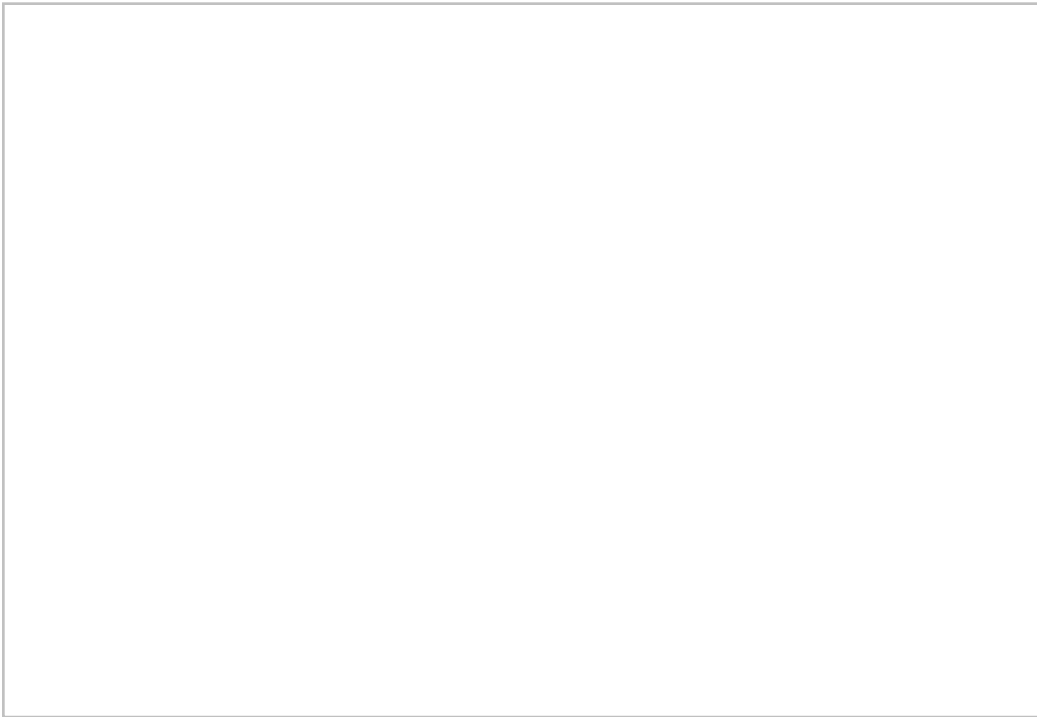
If there was a defining moment in the 2024 election, in hindsight, it was not the assassination attempt on **Donald Trump**. It was not **J.D. Vance's** unverified claims about dogs and cats being eating by immigrants in Springfield, Ohio. It was not the photo ops at McDonalds, Madison Square Garden, or the garbage truck.

It was, instead, an obscure blog post, "[The Little Tech Agenda](#)," written by two wonky (if rich) Silicon Valley insiders, founders of their eponymous Venture Capital firm, **Marc Andreessen** and **Ben Horowitz**.

The 12 Days of Broadband

- *On the First Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [An extra-planetary-life-promoting tech billionaire set on electing a president.](#)*
- *On the Second Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [23 million served by the Affordable Connectivity Program.](#)*
- *On the Third Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [3rd year without the Federal Communications Commission having spectrum auction authority.](#)*
- *On the Fourth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [\\$42.5 billion in Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment funds already allocated.](#)*

- **On the Fifth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
5,500 active satellites currently in Low-Earth Orbit.
- **On the Sixth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
More than 6 years of service at the FCC by Commissioner and Chairman-designate Brendan Carr.
- **On the Seventh Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
More than 70 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually consumed by data centers in the U.S.
- **On the Eighth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
\$8.1 billion dollars in annual Universal Service Funds.
- **On the Ninth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
\$90 billion in global telecom Merger & Acquisition deals value in 2024.
- **On the Tenth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
100 broadband-related rulemakings at the FCC relying on Chevron Deference.
- **On the Eleventh Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
Nearly 11 years to complete the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, complete with defaulted locations.
- **On the Twelfth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:**
12 Senators and Representatives signing the Andreessen-Horowitz “Little Tech” agenda.



DIGITAL EQUITY

[Senators to Question Lutnick Amid Concerns About BEAD](#)

Confirmation Hearing set for Wednesday, January 29, at 10:00 a.m. EST

[New York City Expands Free Wireless, But Missed Opportunities Loom Large](#)

While New York's existing programs are a welcome effort, they remain a far cry from the city's original ambition.

[NaLA Survey Reveals Post-ACP Hardship for Economically Vulnerable](#)

The 68,000 survey responses highlighted a critical need for Lifeline and ACP programs.



BROADBAND LIVE

[Broadband Breakfast on February 12, 2025 -](#)

The Future of Affordable Broadband



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While [2024 saw unprecedented state and local initiatives emerge to keep Americans connected](#) – from New York's landmark low-cost mandate to innovative city-led programs – the landscape is shifting. Though Vice President-elect **J.D. Vance** has been a rare Republican voice supporting broadband subsidies, broader GOP signals suggest major changes ahead for Biden-era connectivity programs. With one-in-six American households previously dependent on the Affordable Connectivity Program for internet access, critical questions emerge: Can state and private sector initiatives fill the widening gap? Will the Trump administration maintain any federal role in broadband affordability? And how will this reshape America's digital divide?

Panelists

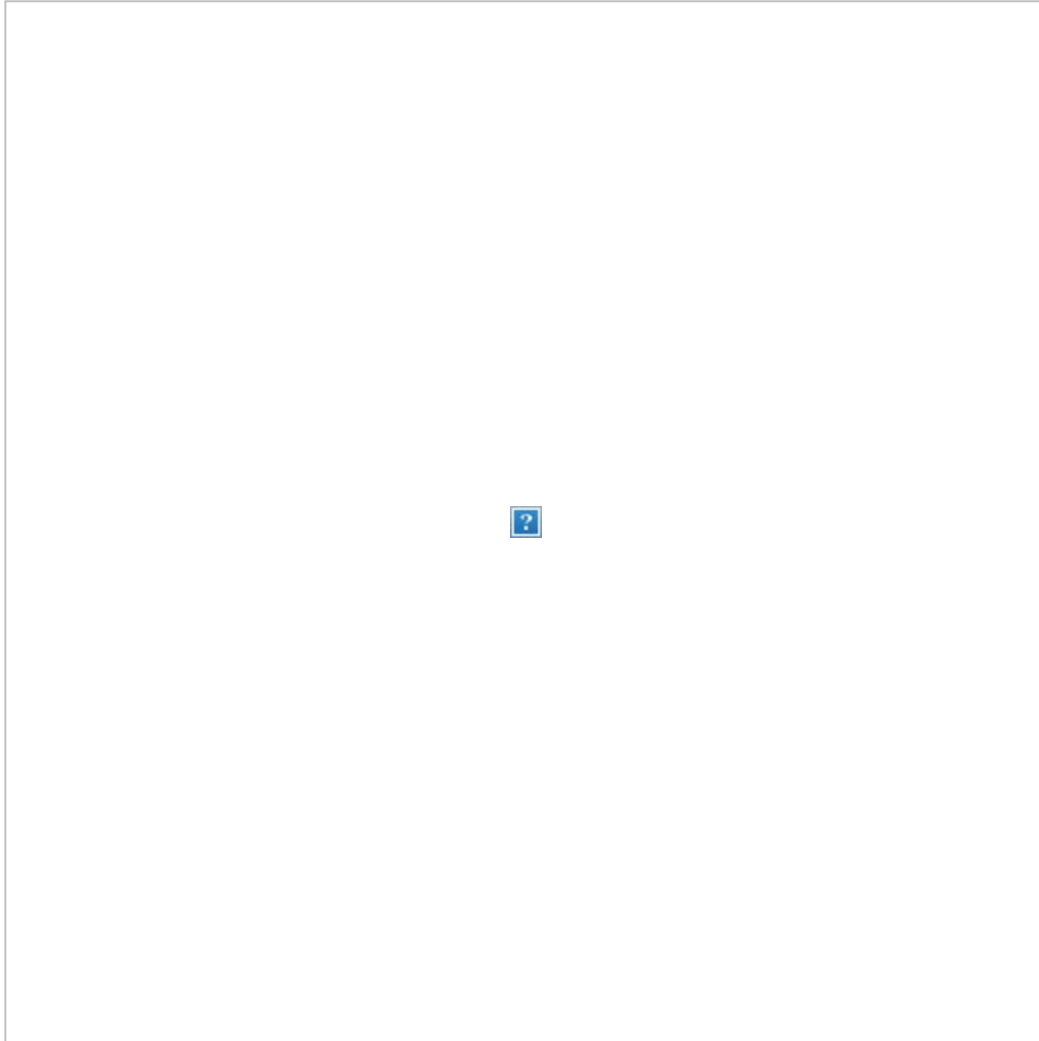
- *Other panelists have been invited*
- **Drew Clark** (moderator), CEO and Publisher, Broadband Breakfast



PREMIUM CHARTS AND DATA

Fourth Chart Added: Broadband Subscribers

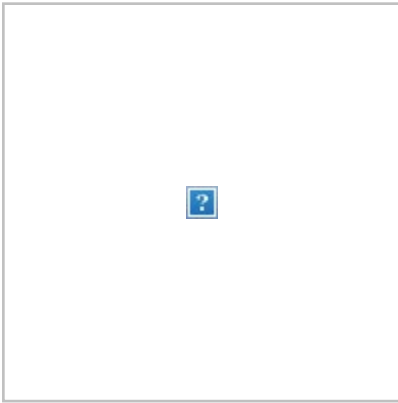
by Technology Type



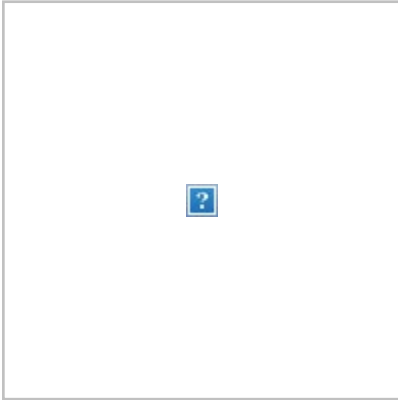
Broadband Breakfast is tracking, on a daily basis, the states accepting grant applications under the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment program.

We're also tracking fixed wireless access subscriptions, and wireline subscriptions, on a quarterly basis. See the charts below:

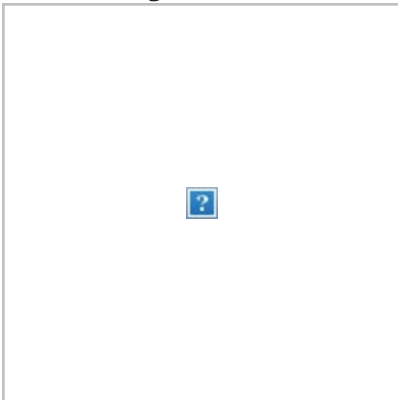
Wireline Broadband Subscribers by Technology



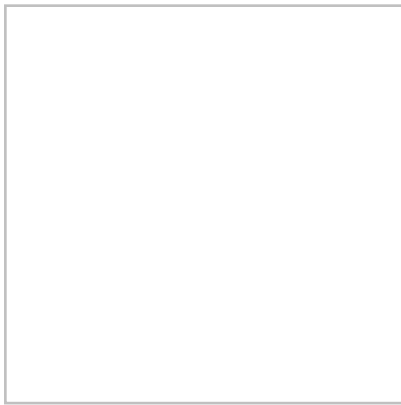
Wireline Subscribers - Net Ads by Quarter



Fixed Wireless Access Subscribers - Net Ads by Quarter

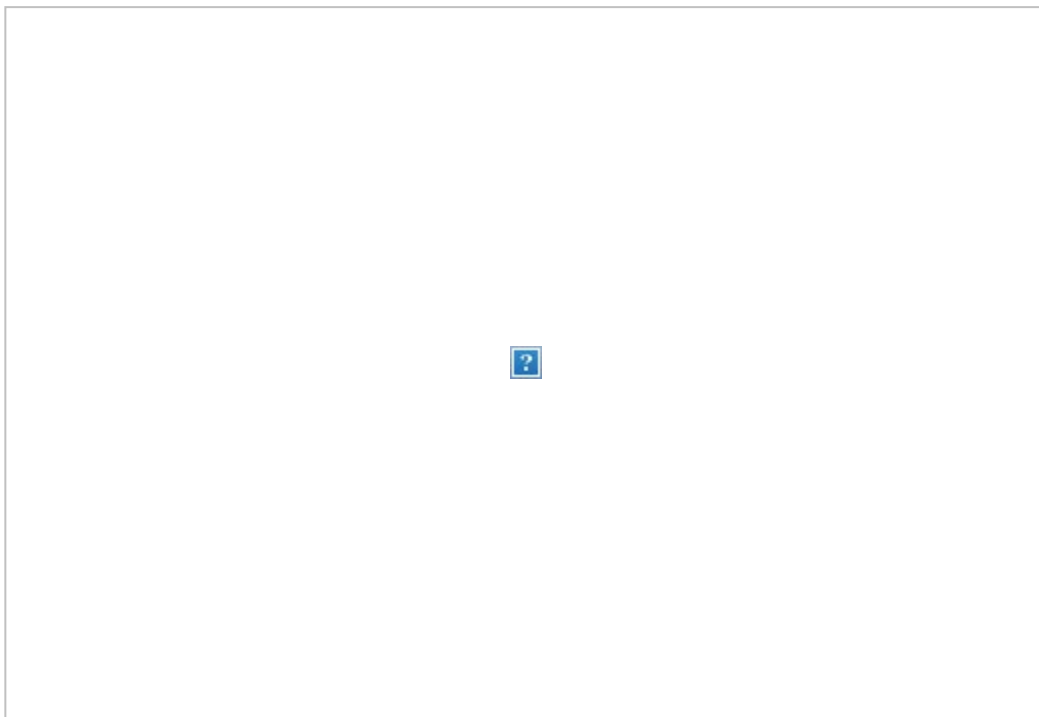


States Accepting BEAD Grant Applications



BROADBAND IN THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

[Videos of 'Broadband in the Trump Administration' Now Available to Breakfast Club Members'](#)



Whether you are a long-standing member of the Broadband Breakfast Club, or joined as part of your in-person registration (3 months' access), or signing up for the webinar (1 month access), you have **UNLIMITED ACCESS** to the videos of Broadband in the Trump Administration.

About Broadband Breakfast:

Broadband Breakfast is the leading media company advocating for higher-capacity internet everywhere through topical, timely and intelligent coverage. The company's annual Digital Infrastructure Investment conference champions a robust 21st century information economy.

Built with passion for Better Broadband, Better Lives.

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From: news=broadbandbreakfast.com@ghost.broadbandbreakfast.com on behalf of [Broadband Breakfast](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: President Trump Signs Orders on Permitting, Regulatory Freeze
Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 2:56:34 PM

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.



TRUMP VANCE ADMINISTRATION

[President Trump Signs Orders on Permitting,
Regulatory Freeze](#)



WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 2025 – One his first day back in office as president, **Donald Trump** signed a flurry of executive orders, including ones directing executive agencies to attempt to streamline federal permitting and pause new policies until appointees are in place.

The [permitting order](#) was largely focused on energy projects, but directed a White House council to issue within 30 days new guidance on implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, which governs environmental permitting for federal projects. It applies to the \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment program.

[DOGE Loses Ramaswamy, Faces Lawsuit Challenging Its Transparency](#)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 2025 – The new Department of Government Efficiency will be losing one of its founding members just hours after its official foundation.

The White House announced Monday that **Vivek Ramaswamy**, a founding member of DOGE, will not be serving on the commission. The

department was conceived by **Donald Trump**, **Elon Musk**, and Ramaswamy in November to dramatically cut back government spending.

[On Day One, Trump Makes Carr FCC Chairman](#)

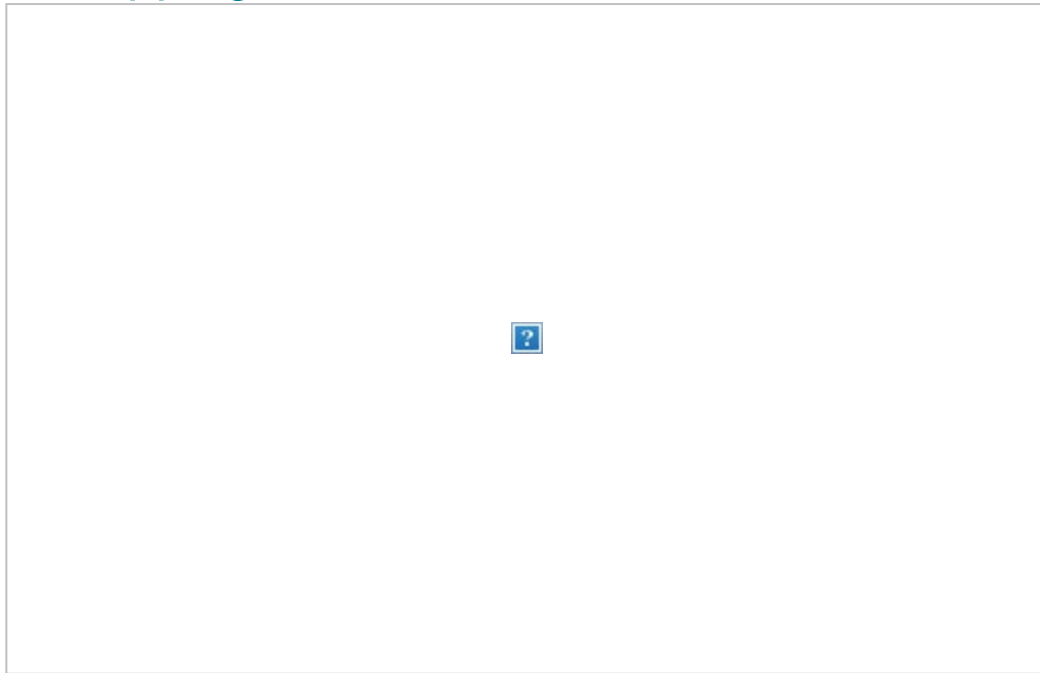
WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 2025 – **Brendan Carr** has officially been designated Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, replacing Biden appointee **Jessica Rosenworcel** as head of the agency, according [to a Monday post on](#) Carr's X profile followed by an official FCC press release.

[Trump Vows to Restore Free Speech in Inauguration Speech](#)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 2025 – **Donald Trump** was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on Monday, pledging to deliver what he called the “complete restoration of America.”

BROADBAND LIVE

[Broadband Breakfast on January 22, 2025 - Recapping the State of the CHIPS Act](#)



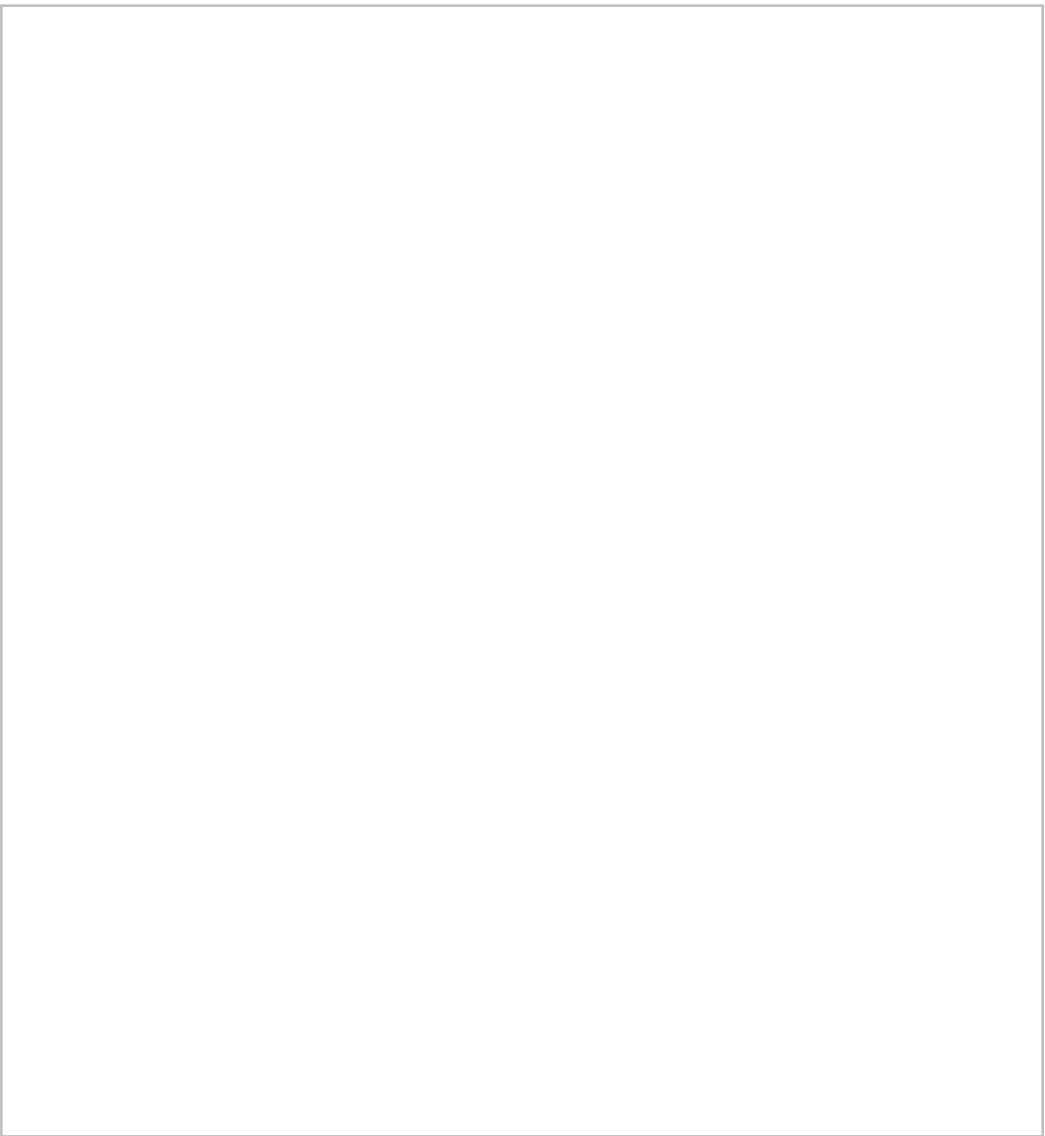
[Sign up for BroadbandLive on Zoom](#)

Nearly two-and-a-half-years since the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022

was signed into law, the initiative to bolster domestic semiconductor manufacturing and innovation is [reshaping the U.S. economy](#). With a \$53 billion investment, the act has created over 115,000 jobs, spurred workforce development programs, and positioned the U.S. on track to produce 30% of the world's semiconductor chips by 2032 - up from just 10% today. Yet, the road ahead is not without challenges. With a Republican-controlled House and a president critical of the legislation, questions remain about its long-term impact and viability. Can the CHIPS Act strengthen U.S. leadership in technology? How will politics affect it?

Panelists

- **Stephen Ezell**, Vice President, Global Innovation Policy, and Director, Center for Life Sciences Innovation, ITIF
- **Gary Hufbauer**, nonresident senior fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics
- **Mimi Strobel**, Senior Director, Policy and Government Relations, Nokia
- **Bryan Clark**, Director, Hudson Institute's Center for Defense Concepts and Technology
- **Drew Clark** (moderator), CEO and Publisher, Broadband Breakfast



Stephen Ezell is Vice President, Global Innovation Policy at the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF) and Director of ITIF's [Center for Life Sciences Innovation](#). He also leads the [Global Trade and Innovation Policy Alliance](#). His areas of expertise include science and technology policy, international competitiveness, trade, and manufacturing. Ezell is the coauthor of [Innovating in a Service-Driven Economy: Insights, Application, and Practice](#) (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) and [Innovation Economics: The Race for Global Advantage](#) (Yale, 2012). Ezell holds a B.S. from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, with an honors certificate from Georgetown's Landegger International Business Diplomacy program.

Gary Clyde Hufbauer, nonresident senior fellow, was the Institute's Reginald Jones Senior Fellow from 1992 to January 2018. He was

previously the Maurice Greenberg Chair and Director of Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations (1996–98), the Marcus Wallenberg Professor of International Finance Diplomacy at Georgetown University (1985–92), senior fellow at the Institute (1981–85), deputy director of the International Law Institute at Georgetown University (1979–81); deputy assistant secretary for international trade and investment policy of the US Treasury (1977–79); and director of the international tax staff at the Treasury (1974–76).

Mimi Strobel currently serves as Senior Director of Policy and Government Relations for Nokia, where she works with a team covering advocacy and outreach with the U.S. Congress and the Administration on a wide range of topics including technology, telecommunications, innovation/emerging tech R&D, trade, and the business and geopolitical impacts of various issues. She also leads Nokia’s work regarding the CHIPS and Science Act, including Nokia’s membership with the National Semiconductor Technology Center.

Bryan Clark is a senior fellow and director of the Center for Defense Concepts and Technology at Hudson Institute. He is an expert in naval operations, electronic warfare, autonomous systems, military competitions, and wargaming. From 2013 to 2019, Mr. Clark was a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), where he led studies for the Office of Net Assessment, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency on new technologies and the future of warfare.



CONGRESS

[Think Tank Analysts Outline Pro-Growth Broadband Reforms](#)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 2025 — Analysts at the Competitive Enterprise Institute are urging Congress to enact broad telecommunications reforms as outlined in CEI’s Jan. 14 [Pro-Growth Agenda](#) for the 119th Congress.

[Lawmakers, Past FCC Leaders Urge Supreme Court to Uphold USF](#)

In all, 29 lawmakers and eight former FCC commissioners signed the

briefs.

[TikTok Goes Dark, Restarts After Executive Order Commitment From Trump](#)

TikTok said it was restoring service after President-elect Donald Trump said he would issue an executive order ensuring service.

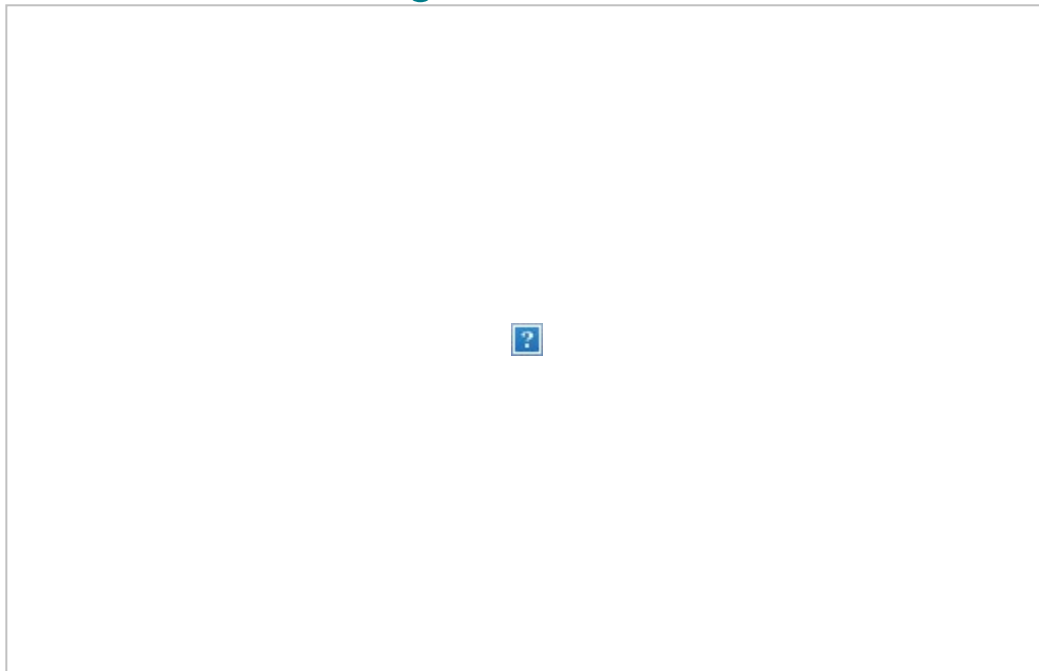
[Supreme Court Upholds TikTok Sell-or-Ban Law](#)

Biden leaves TikTok's fate to Trump as the divestiture deadline approaches Sunday.



BROADBAND LIVE

[Broadband Breakfast on January 29, 2025 - The 'Little Tech' Agenda](#)



[Sign up for BroadbandLive on Zoom](#)

[A single blog post](#) in July 2024 helped reshape the political landscape of tech and innovation in American politics. ["The Little Tech Agenda."](#) penned by Silicon Valley veterans **Marc Andreessen** and **Ben Horowitz**, created an unexpected bridge between the tech hub's innovation culture and Trump's political resurgence. What began as a

modest proposal for startup-friendly regulations and cryptocurrency innovation became a catalyst for a broader tech-political realignment, drawing prominent venture capitalists and tech leaders into Trump's orbit. Can this alliance between Silicon Valley disruptors and Trump's political movement survive the realities of governing? Will the "techno-optimist" vision outlined in the agenda translate into effective policy? And what does this shift mean for the future of American innovation and tech regulation?

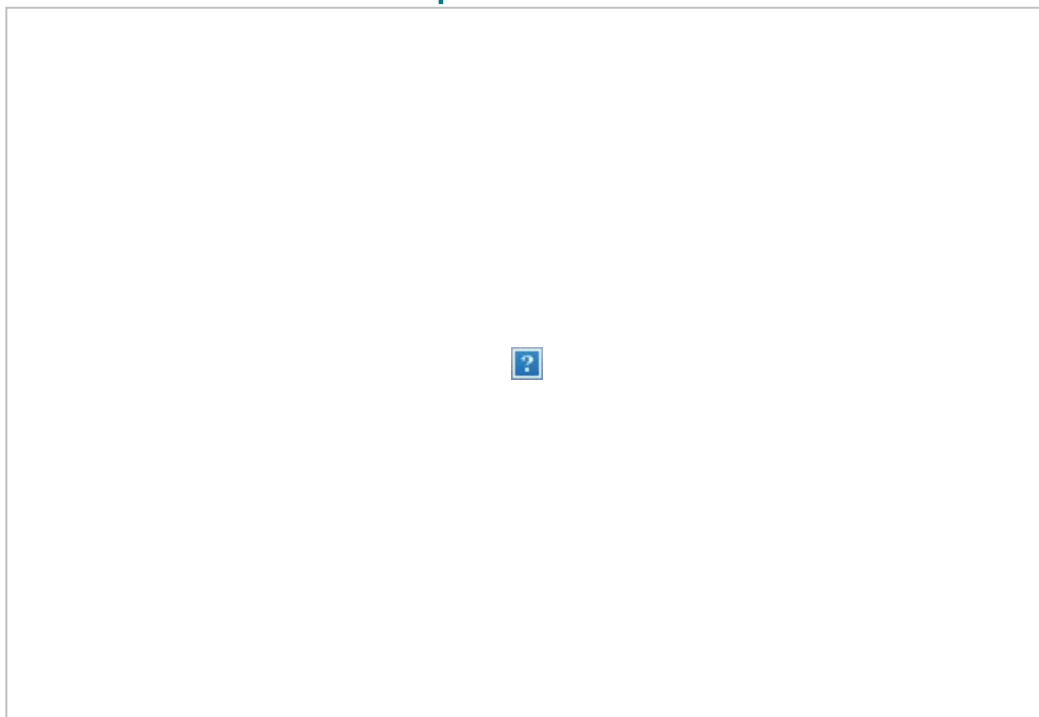
Panelists

- *Other panelists have been invited*
- **Drew Clark** (moderator), CEO and Publisher, Broadband Breakfast



THE 12 DAYS OF BROADBAND

[The 'Little Tech Agenda' Becomes a Manifesto for Trump 2.0](#)



If there was a defining moment in the 2024 election, in hindsight, it was not the assassination attempt on **Donald Trump**. It was not **J.D. Vance's** unverified claims about dogs and cats being eating by

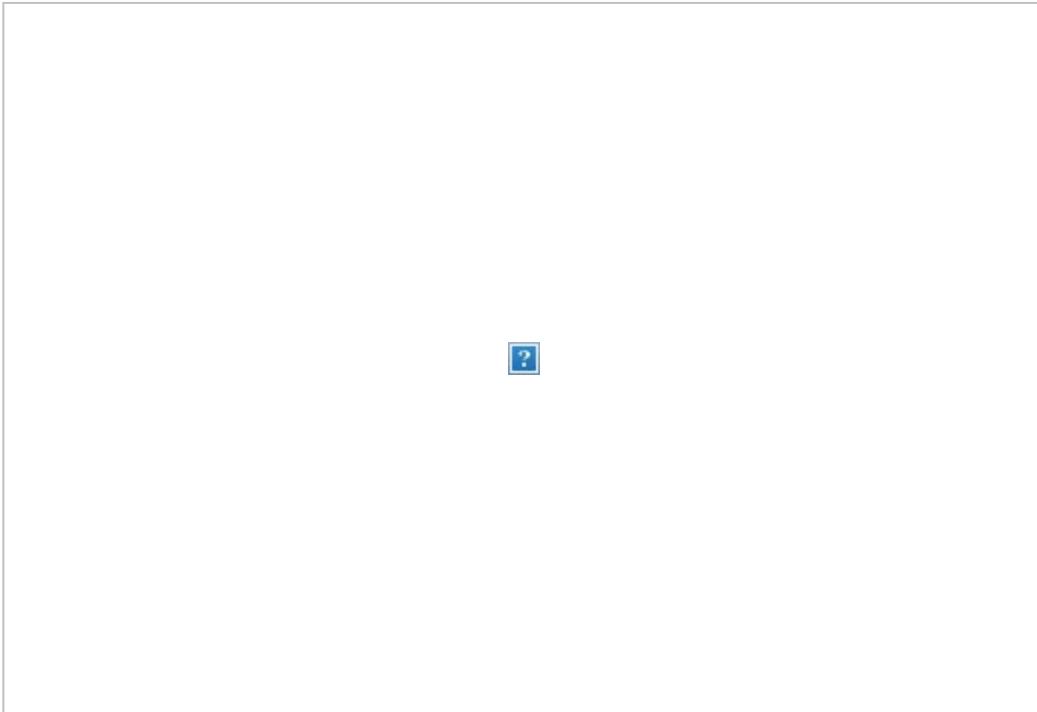
immigrants in Springfield, Ohio. It was not the photo ops at McDonalds, Madison Square Garden, or the garbage truck.

It was, instead, an obscure blog post, "[The Little Tech Agenda](#)," written by two wonky (if rich) Silicon Valley insiders, founders of their eponymous Venture Capital firm, **Marc Andreessen** and **Ben Horowitz**.

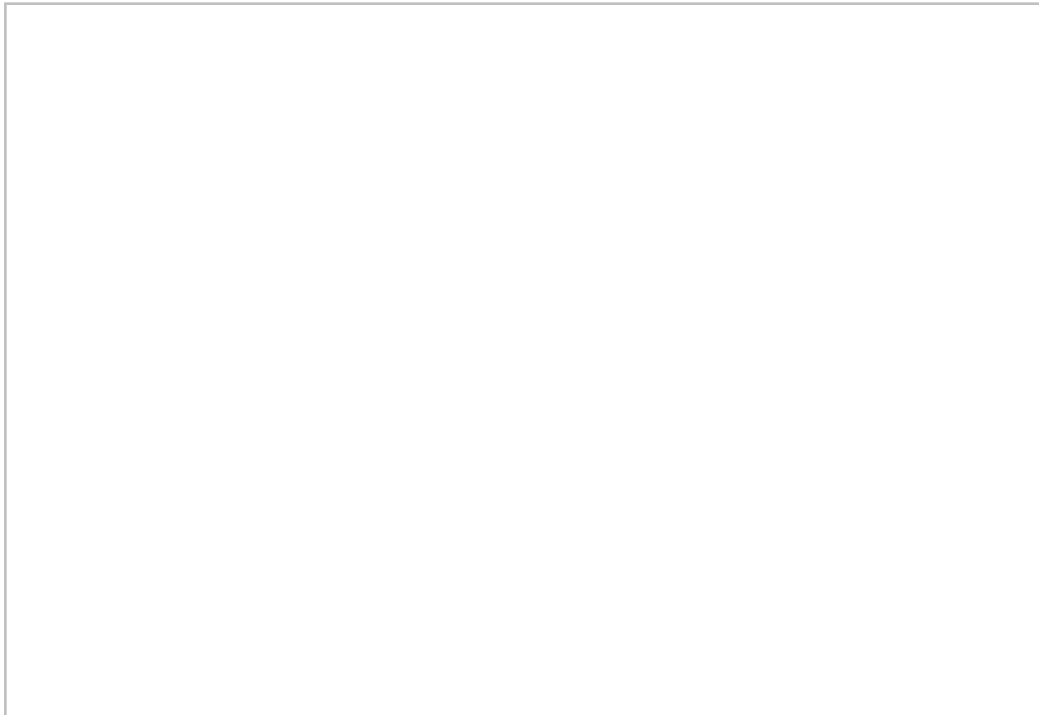
The 12 Days of Broadband

- *On the First Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [An extra-planetary-life-promoting tech billionaire set on electing a president.](#)*
- *On the Second Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [23 million served by the Affordable Connectivity Program.](#)*
- *On the Third Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [3rd year without the Federal Communications Commission having spectrum auction authority.](#)*
- *On the Fourth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [\\$42.5 billion in Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment funds already allocated.](#)*
- *On the Fifth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [5,500 active satellites currently in Low-Earth Orbit.](#)*
- *On the Sixth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [More than 6 years of service at the FCC by Commissioner and Chairman-designate Brendan Carr.](#)*
- *On the Seventh Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [More than 70 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually consumed by data centers in the U.S.](#)*
- *On the Eighth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [\\$8.1 billion dollars in annual Universal Service Funds.](#)*
- *On the Ninth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [\\$90 billion in global telecom Merger & Acquisition deals value in 2024.](#)*
- *On the Tenth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me: [100 broadband-related rulemakings at the FCC relying on Chevron Deference.](#)*

- ***On the Eleventh Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:***
Nearly 11 years to complete the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, complete with defaulted locations.
- ***On the Twelfth Day of Broadband, my true love sent to me:***
12 Senators and Representatives signing the Andreessen-Horowitz “Little Tech” agenda.

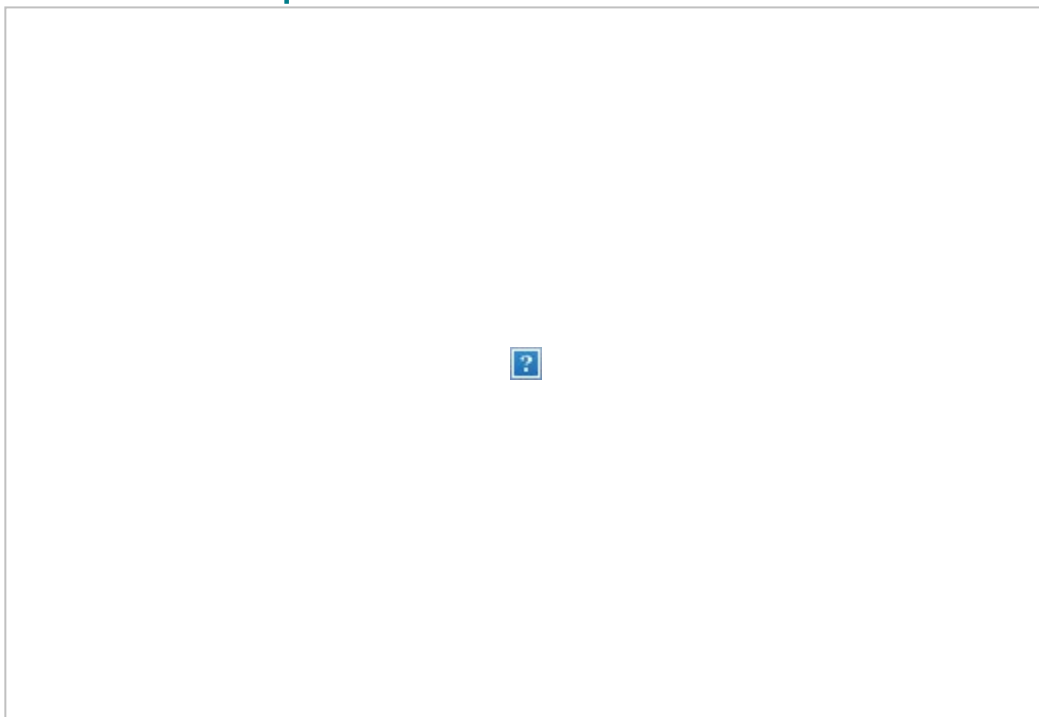


A Troubled Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Program Comes Due



It's the broadband funding albatross that Federal Communications Commission Chairwoman **Jessica Rosenworcel** never wanted.

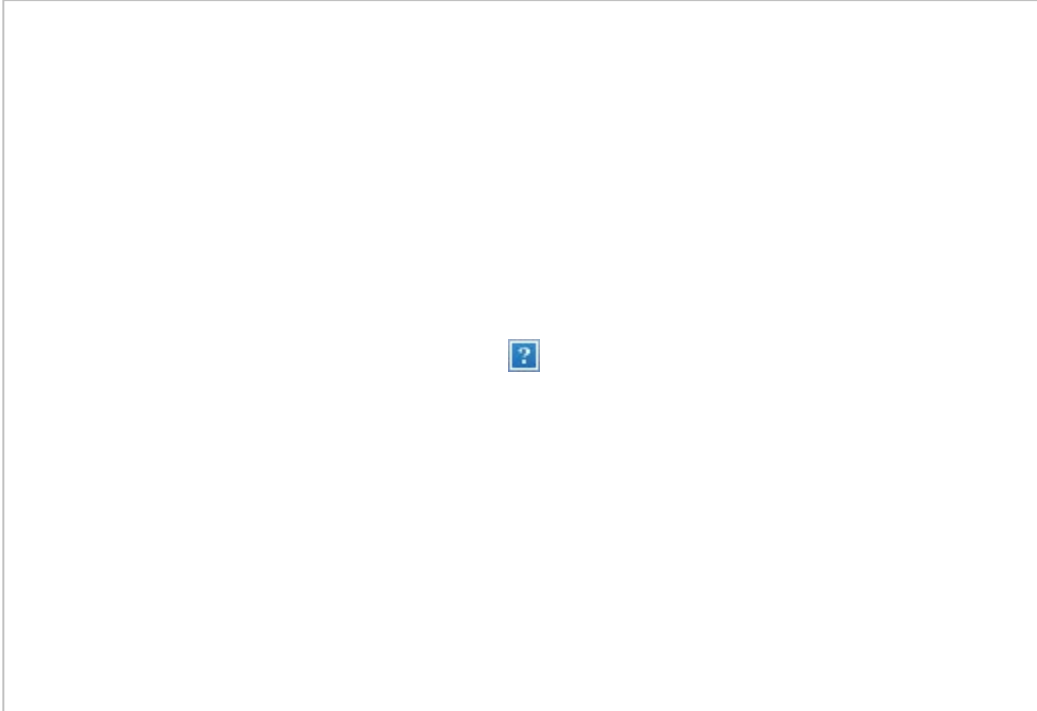
[Loper Bright, A Court Ruling That Changes How D.C. Operates](#)



A Supreme Court decision this year redefined the balance of power between federal agencies and the courts – curbing the power of

regulators like the Federal Communications Commission and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to interpret ambiguous statutes.

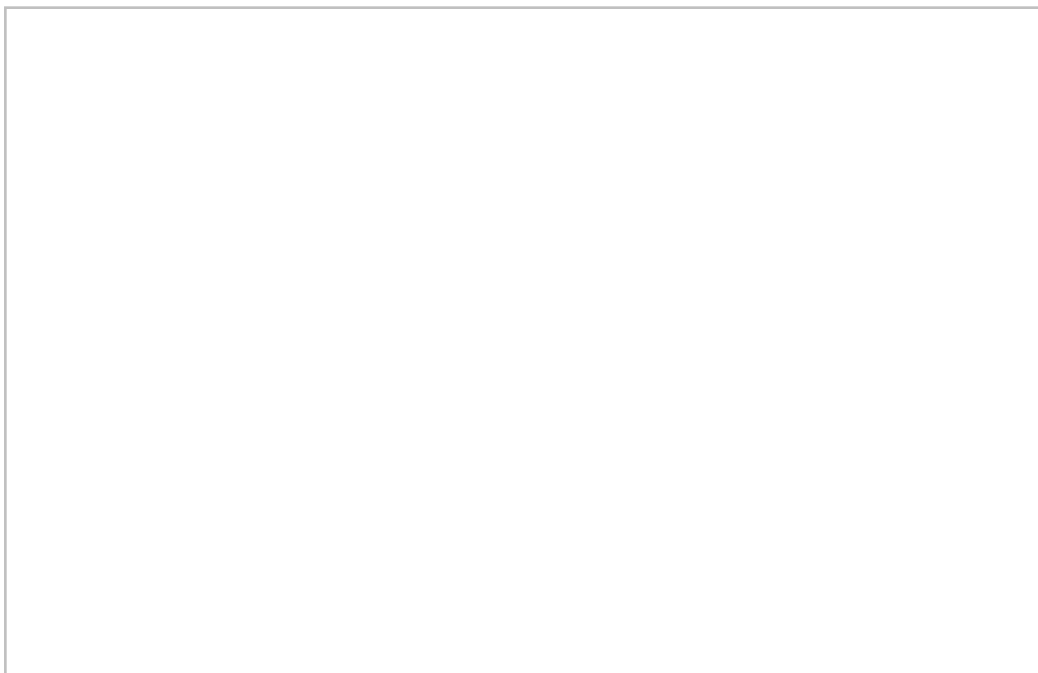
[A Year of Telecom Mergers and Acquisitions](#)



Fiber broadband saw a flurry of major deals in 2024. Major mobile carriers are expected to continue snapping up fiber providers in the coming year, as they look to offer converged services in a regulatory environment that looks to be getting friendlier.

BROADBAND LIVE

[Broadband Breakfast on February 5, 2025 - Next Steps for Spectrum Auction Renewal](#)



[Sign up for BroadbandLive on Zoom](#)

The Federal Communications Commission [enters its third year without spectrum auction authority](#), marking an unprecedented pause in its decades-long role of managing America's airwaves. At stake is the future of 5G deployment and potential spectrum sharing with military radar systems. As incoming FCC Chairman **Brendan Carr** prepares to take the helm, and Republican lawmakers consider attaching auction authority to budget reconciliation, key questions emerge: Can bipartisan agreement be reached on auction terms and federal spectrum sharing? Will the FCC find alternative ways to manage spectrum without auction authority? And how will this regulatory limbo affect America's wireless future?

Panelists

- *Other panelists have been invited*
- **Drew Clark** (moderator), CEO and Publisher, Broadband Breakfast

RURAL BROADBAND

[Ookla: South Carolina Tops Nation in a Rural Speed Category](#)

State leaders say improved mapping helped to improve rural speeds

[SpaceX Asks to Shield Starlink from New York's \\$15 Broadband Law](#)

Starlink claims it serves 'fewer than 20,000 households' in the state, qualifying for an exemption.

[Maine Announces Updates to Starlink, BEAD Programs](#)

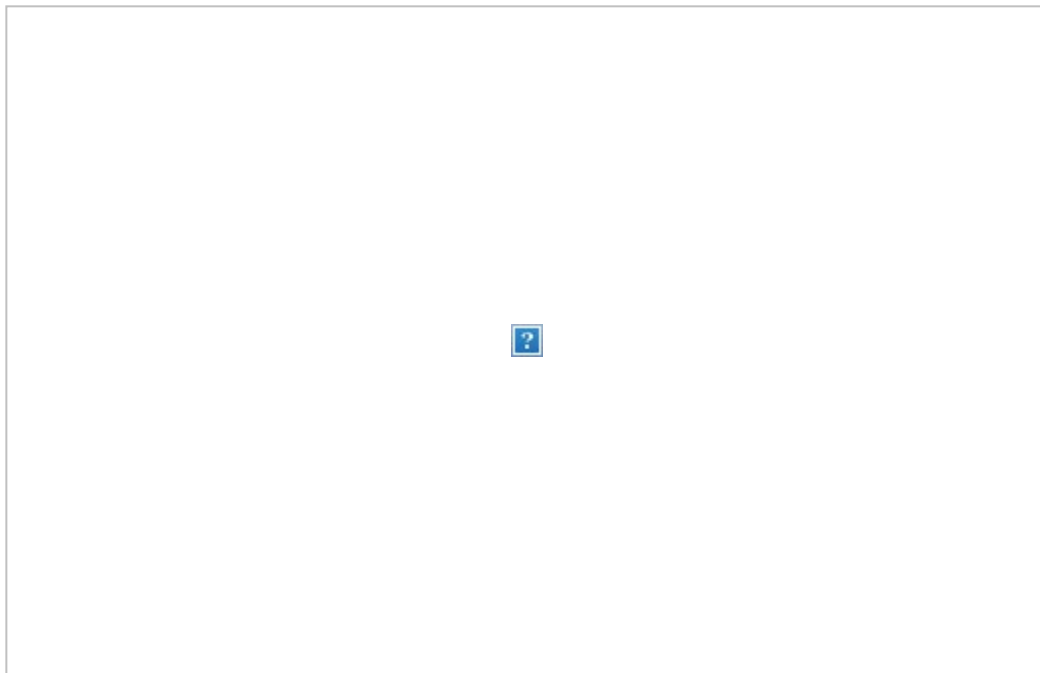
State has received just under 200 applications for LEO project in the first month

[NTIA Approves \\$369 Million in Digital Equity Grants](#)

The agency has tapped a total of \$619 million from its \$910 million funding round.

BROADBAND LIVE

[Broadband Breakfast on February 12, 2025 - The Future of Affordable Broadband](#)



[Sign up for BroadbandLive on Zoom](#)

While [2024 saw unprecedented state and local initiatives emerge to keep Americans connected](#) – from New York's landmark low-cost mandate to

innovative city-led programs – the landscape is shifting. Though Vice President-elect **J.D. Vance** has been a rare Republican voice supporting broadband subsidies, broader GOP signals suggest major changes ahead for Biden-era connectivity programs. With one-in-six American households previously dependent on the Affordable Connectivity Program for internet access, critical questions emerge: Can state and private sector initiatives fill the widening gap? Will the Trump administration maintain any federal role in broadband affordability? And how will this reshape America's digital divide?

Panelists

- *Other panelists have been invited*
- **Drew Clark** (moderator), CEO and Publisher, Broadband Breakfast



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[FCC Names Participants in Cybersecurity Pilot Program for Schools and Libraries](#)

The program will provide \$200 million to strengthen cybersecurity systems for schools and libraries.

[O’Rielly: Too Late for NTIA to Pivot from Pro-Fiber Approach](#)

Shifting away from fiber may not be practical.

[FCC’s Broadband Mapping Fabric Will Now Drive Other Agency Programs](#)

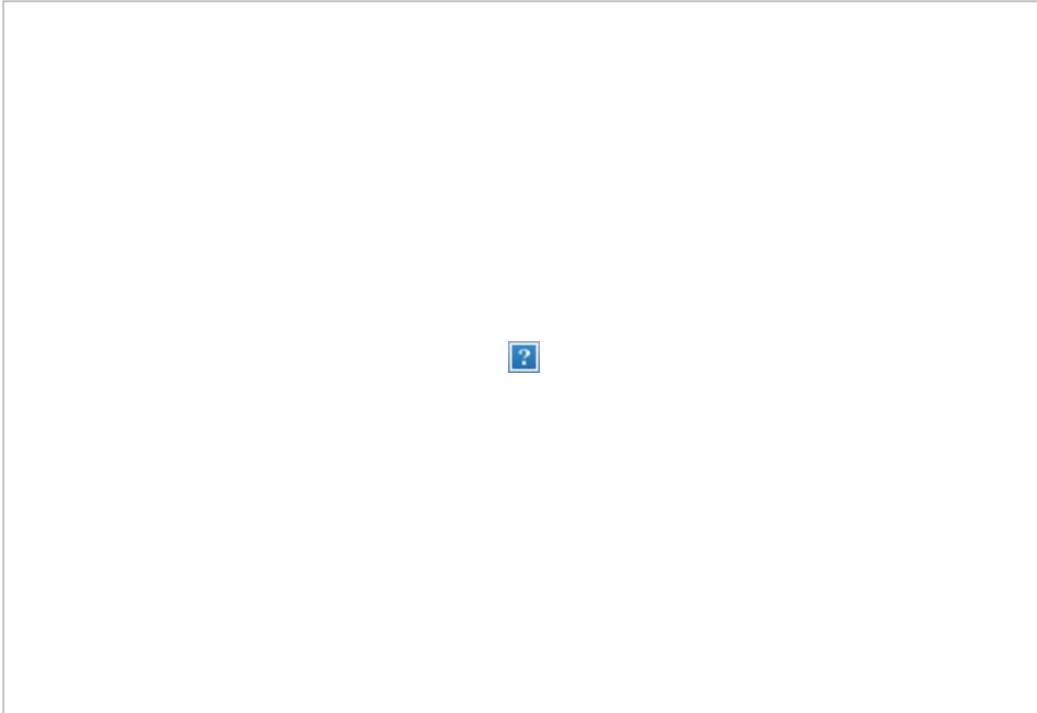
FCC’s new mapping fabric will drive Rural Digital Opportunity Fund 'true-up'.



THE 12 DAYS OF BROADBAND

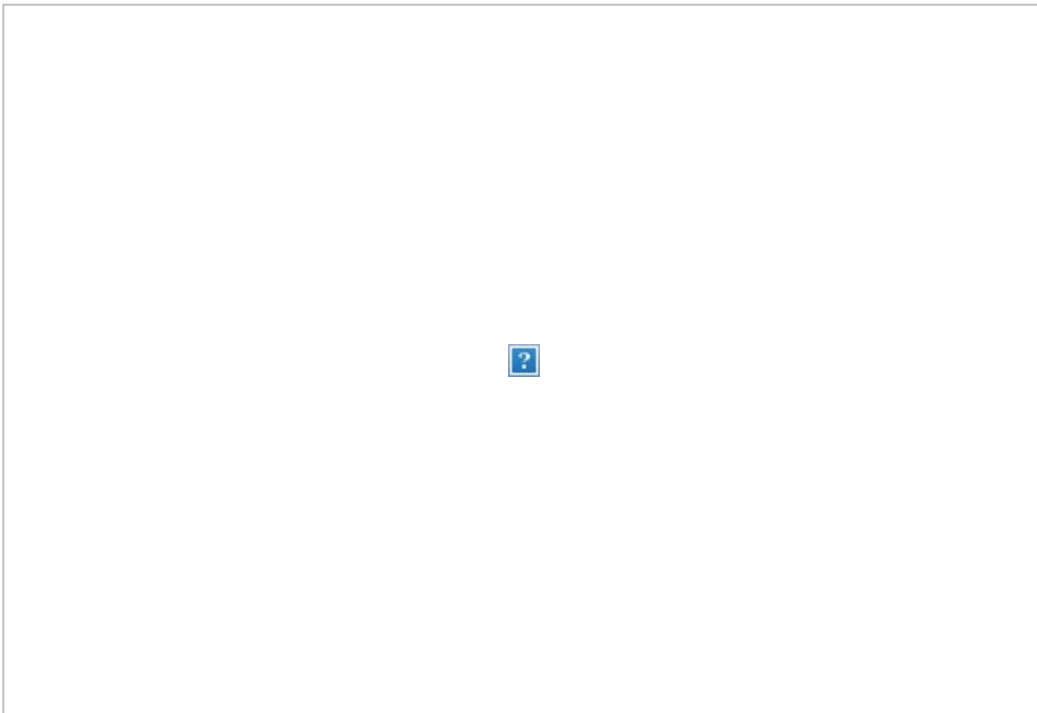
[A Year of Challenges for the Universal](#)

Service Fund



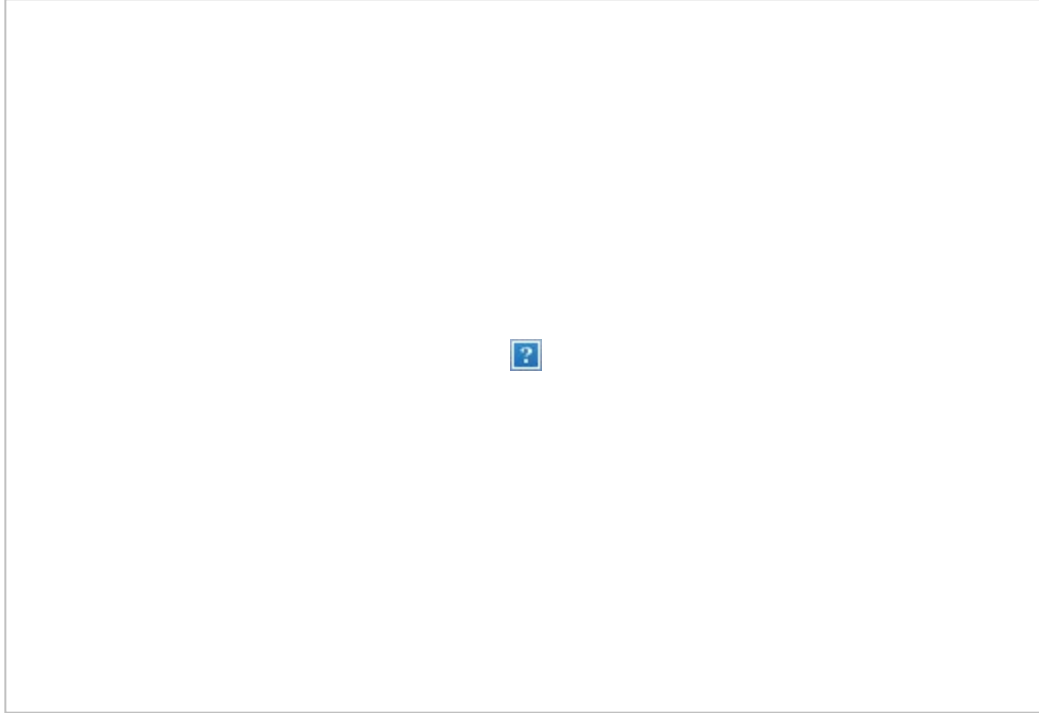
The \$8.1 billion Universal Service Fund faced a year of challenges in 2024 triggered by a court decision that could require a new law by Congress to reverse.

AI Revolution Sparked Growth in Data Centers



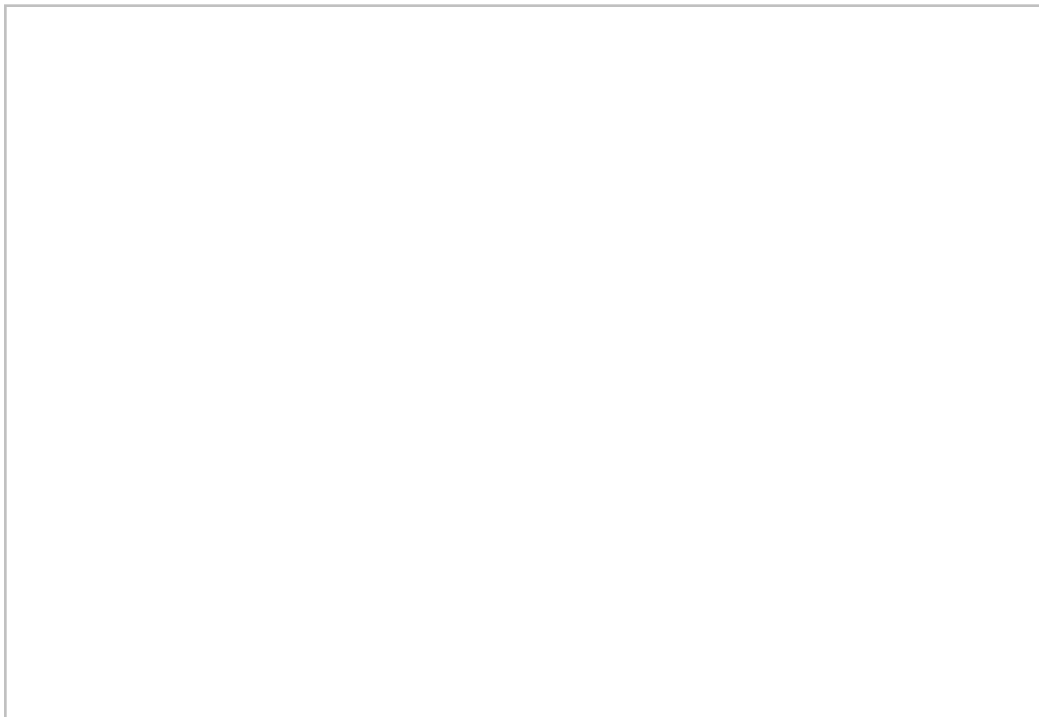
In 2024, the backbone of America's digital transformation rested on thousands of data centers providing the computational power for AI, cloud services, and high-speed internet connectivity.

New Year, New FCC Chair



President-elect **Donald Trump** tapped **Brendan Carr** to lead the Federal Communications Commission in his second term, and he's poised to roll back many of the major rulemakings enacted by current FCC Chairwoman **Jessica Rosenworcel**.

A Big Launch Year for Low Earth Orbit Satellites

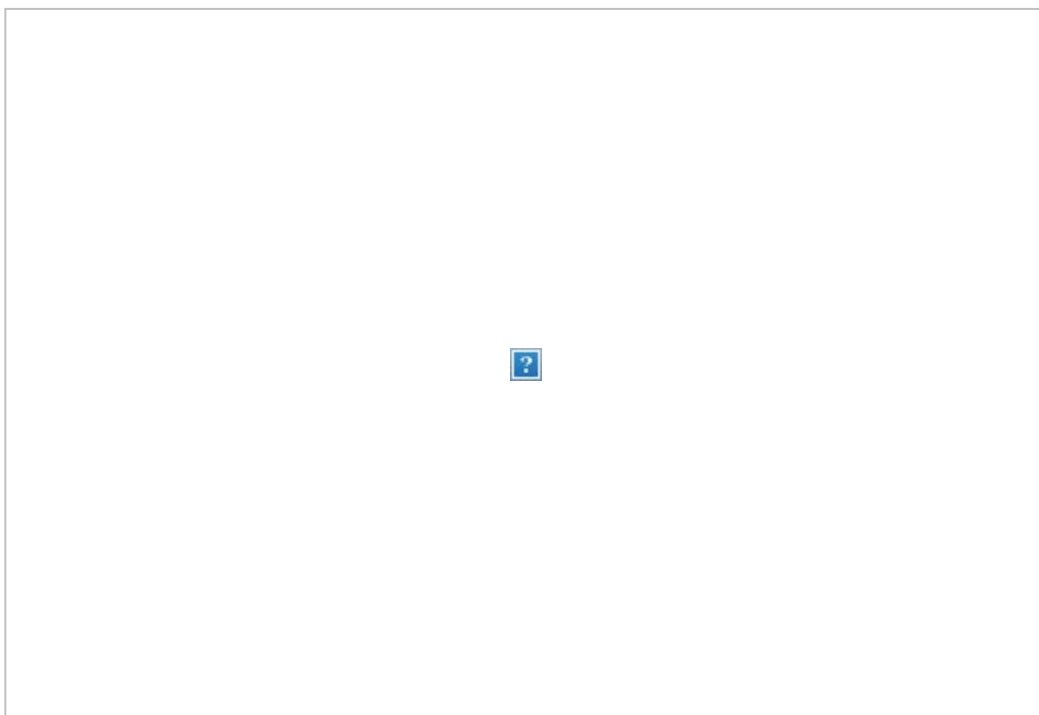


A three-judge panel held that broadband is an information service under the Telecommunications Act.



THE 12 DAYS OF BROADBAND

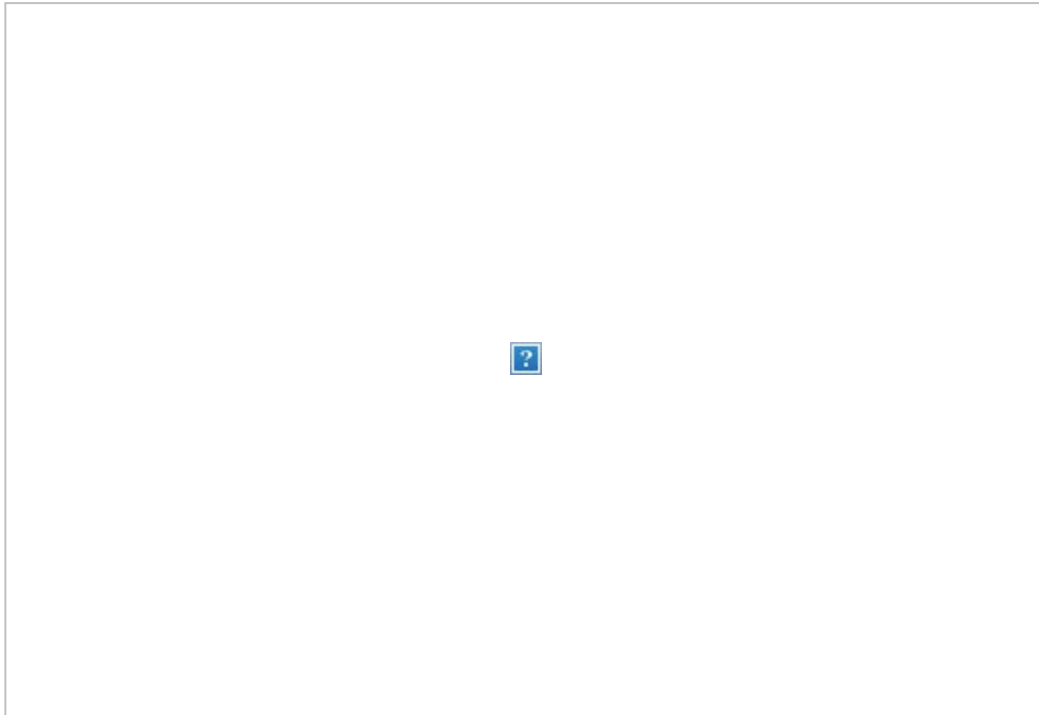
[A Year of Prepping for BEAD Projects](#)



State broadband heads forged ahead with preparations to get BEAD

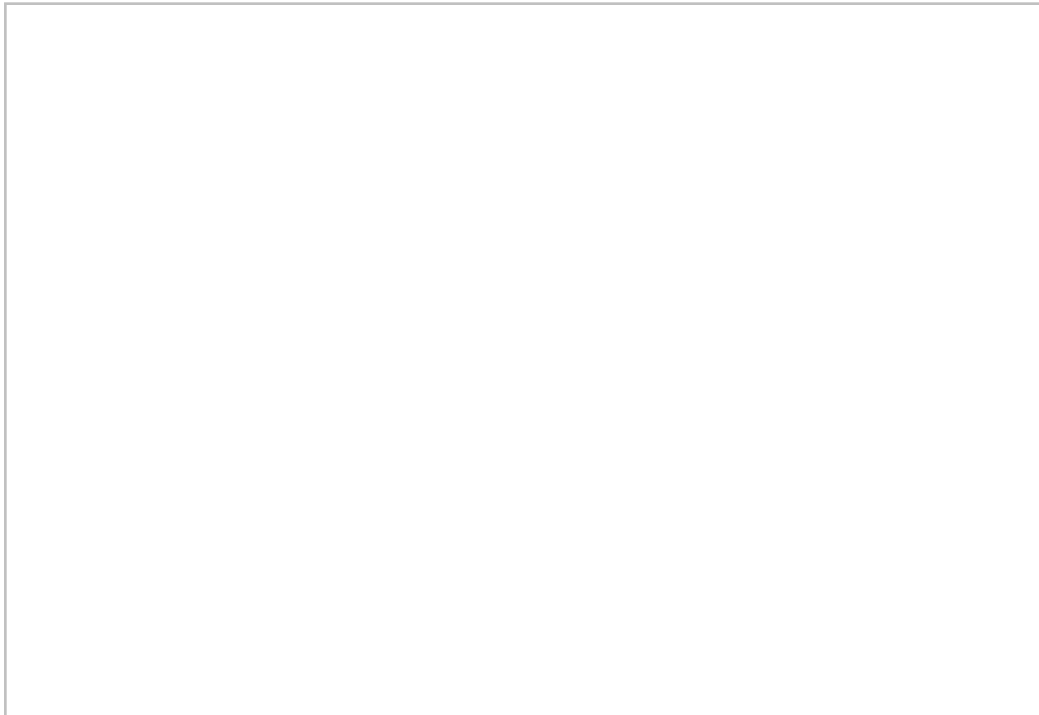
grants out the door in 2024 — over a steady stream of GOP grumbling. There's been talk among the party and industry watchers about potential changes under the incoming Trump administration, while the agency running the program has maintained nothing too disruptive is on the horizon.

[Going Into Year 3 Without FCC Spectrum Auction Authority](#)



The Federal Communications Commission went its first full year without the ability to auction off airwaves in 2024, and the gridlock doesn't show signs of letting up in the near future.

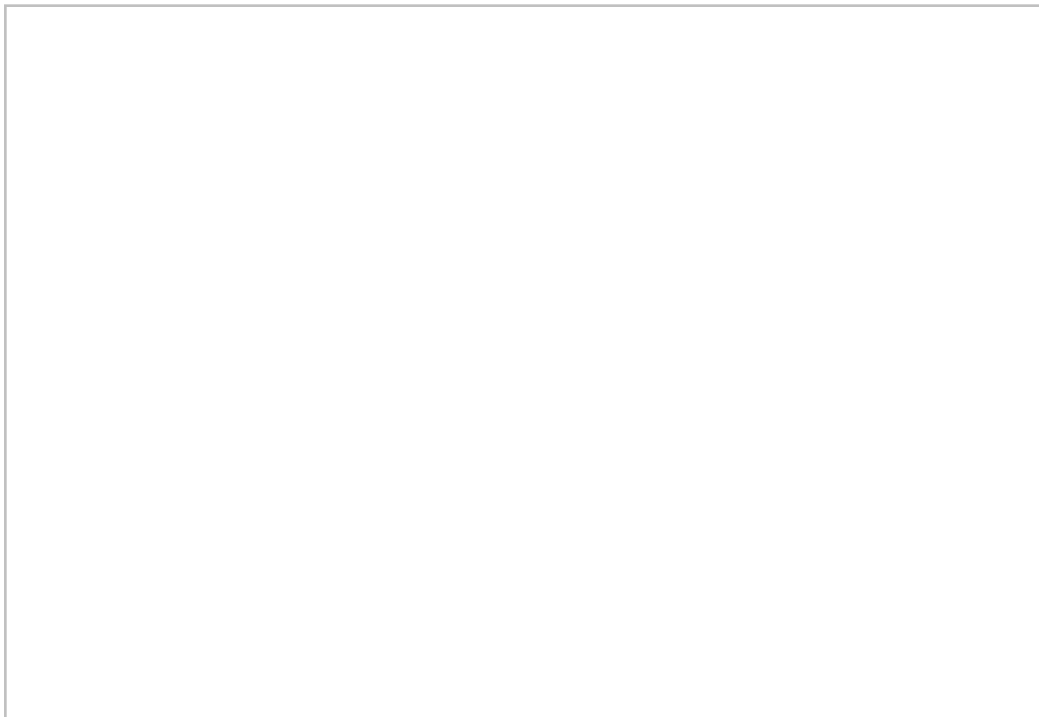
[The Year States Stepped Up for Broadband Affordability](#)



In 2024, the fight to close the digital divide zeroed in on a critical issue: the affordability of broadband.

This year, all 50 U.S. states identified the cost of broadband service as [the primary barrier](#) to achieving equitable access to high-speed internet, a finding reflected in states' digital equity plans developed for the \$42.5 billion [Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment](#) program.

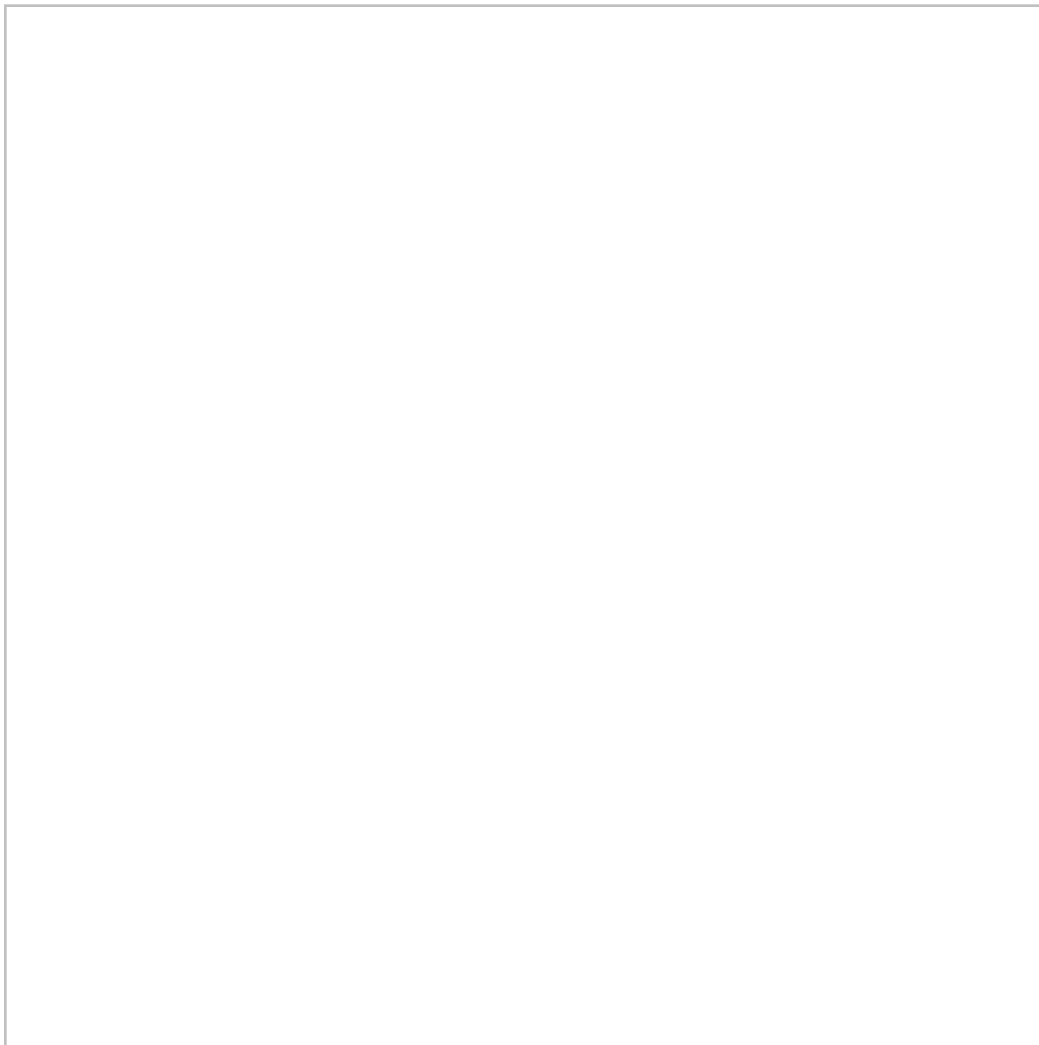
Broadband Breakfast Person of the Year: Elon Musk



In the course of barely more than the month since Election Day, the Department of Government Efficiency has gone from a cryptocurrency joke to a potentially far-ranging force for a transformative Trump Administration: Powered by **Elon Musk**.

PREMIUM CHARTS AND DATA

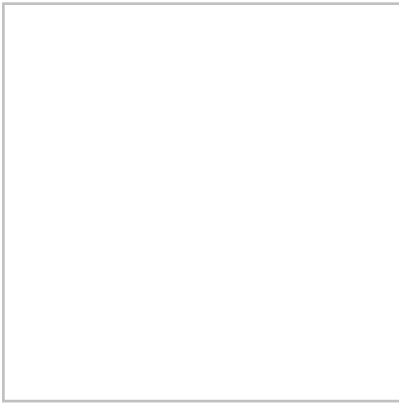
[Fourth Chart Added: Broadband Subscribers by Technology Type](#)



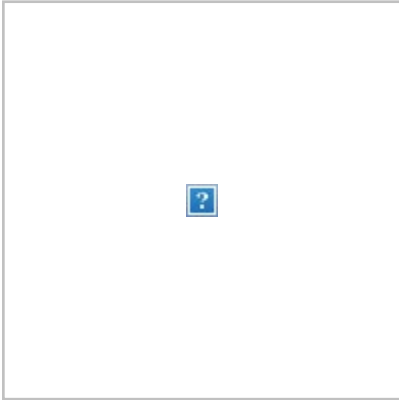
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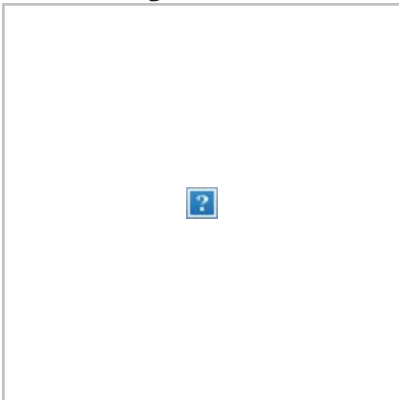
Wireline Broadband Subscribers by Technology



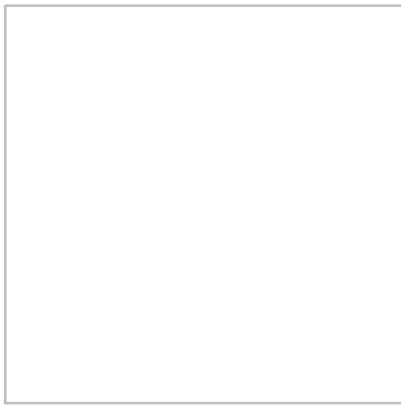
Wireline Subscribers - Net Ads by Quarter



Fixed Wireless Access Subscribers - Net Ads by Quarter

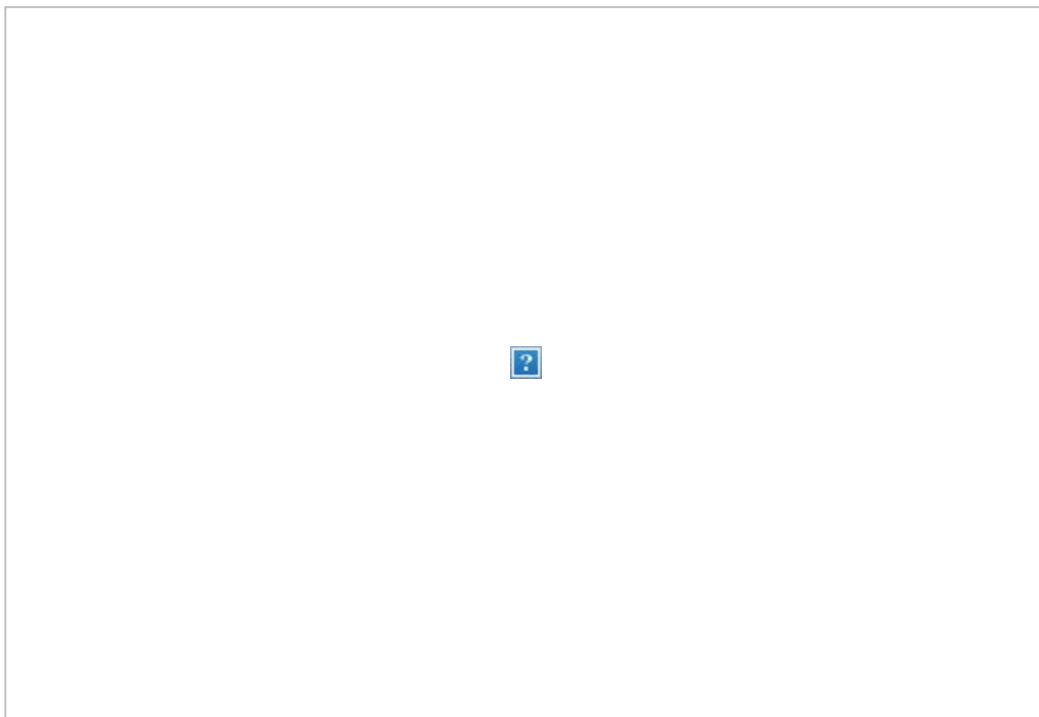


States Accepting BEAD Grant Applications



BROADBAND IN THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

[Videos of 'Broadband in the Trump Administration' Now Available to Breakfast Club Members'](#)



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Thank you for being a Broadband Breakfast Club Member. As a Member, you have *unlimited access* to topical and relevant news on high-speed internet connectivity. Don't miss our on-the-ground coverage of changes in Washington – and how they impact the states and communities in the U.S.

Do you have a news tip or a story you'd like covered? Email press@breakfast.media. Sign in to see your Breakfast Club benefits!

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About Broadband Breakfast:

Broadband Breakfast is the leading media company advocating for higher-capacity internet everywhere through topical, timely and intelligent coverage. The company's annual Digital Infrastructure Investment conference champions a robust 21st century information economy.

Built with passion for Better Broadband, Better Lives.

1750 K Street NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20006

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From: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
To: [Stritzinger, Jr, James](#)
Subject: RE: [External] BEAD funding is ok
Date: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 3:17:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Yep. Dictates from the top.

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: Stritzinger, Jr, James <JStritzinger@ors.sc.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 3:16 PM
To: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>
Subject: RE: [External] BEAD funding is ok

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Yes, I just saw this too; however, I talked with some NTIA folks at 11:30am and they had no idea about this. Things are very fluid! Thanks for sharing!

Jim

Office: (803) 737-8025
Mobile: (803) 606-6398

From: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 2:00 PM
To: Stritzinger, Jr, James <JStritzinger@ors.sc.gov>
Subject: [External] BEAD funding is ok

I assume you got the word. Here it is - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/01/omb-memo-m-25-11/>

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: [Powell, Marc](#)
To: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
Subject: Re: BEAD funder under new executive order
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 2:01:54 PM

You don't often get email from mpowell@alvarezandmarsal.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

In case you did not see this:

[Federal grant freeze: Trump White House rescinds order | AP News](#)

From: Powell, Marc <mpowell@alvarezandmarsal.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 11:27 AM
To: christine.hallquist@vermont.gov <christine.hallquist@vermont.gov>
Subject: BEAD funder under new executive order

Hey Christine,

This is Marc Powell formerly of Altman Solon and EY. I presented to you when you were selecting a BEAD program consultant, before I retired. It's been a while since we talked.

I am putting feelers out to various folks regarding BEAD under the new executive order. Have you heard any rumor or fact? I will keep you posted as soon as I hear something.

Marc

From: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
To: [Fish, Robert](#); [Herzog, Herryn](#)
Subject: RE: BEAD
Date: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 10:41:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

I will take this one. For now, we are awaiting guidance from the NTIA and we will get back to him after. That is all we should say. There is no need to interview at this point or say more.

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: Fish, Robert <Robert.Fish@vermont.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 10:39 AM
To: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>; Herzog, Herryn <Herryn.Herzog@vermont.gov>
Subject: FW: BEAD

I assume the message for now is all steam ahead, but I propose we write back to Howard to ask us the question tomorrow for a full update.

Robert Fish | Deputy Director
Strategy, Policy, and Digital Opportunities

Vermont Community Broadband Board
Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620
802-522-2617
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)

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From: Howard Weiss-Tisman <hweisstisman@vermontpublic.org>

Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 10:37 AM

To: Herzog, Herryn <Herryn.Herzog@vermont.gov>; Fish, Robert <Robert.Fish@vermont.gov>

Subject: BEAD

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hey Herryn.

Any early indications for federal BEAD funding?

Is the federal money in the state's hands?

Or

Is the state certain the BEAD money will be allocated on time?

Or

Is the state planning for a delay?

Something in between maybe?

What do we know at this time?

Howard

Howard Weiss-Tisman (He/Him/His)

Reporter | [@hweisstisman](#)

Vermont Public

P: (802) 654-4306 | M: (802) 451-9851

hweisstisman@vermontpublic.org | [@hweisstisman](#)

From: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
To: [Rose, Jonathan](#); [Farnham, Douglas](#)
Cc: [Clithero, Toni H](#); [Fish, Robert](#); [Johnson, Kerrick](#); [Kane, Ryan](#); [Clark, Charity](#)
Subject: RE: Concerned
Date: Friday, January 24, 2025 9:32:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

Thank you and to the entire team at the Attorney General's office for your due diligence in these trying times.

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: Rose, Jonathan <Jonathan.Rose@vermont.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2025 8:46 AM
To: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>; Farnham, Douglas <Douglas.Farnham@vermont.gov>
Cc: Clithero, Toni H <Toni.Clithero@vermont.gov>; Fish, Robert <Robert.Fish@vermont.gov>; Johnson, Kerrick <Kerrick.Johnson@vermont.gov>; Kane, Ryan <Ryan.Kane@vermont.gov>; Clark, Charity <Charity.R.Clark@vermont.gov>
Subject: FW: Concerned

Hello Christine –

Charity forwarded your correspondence from yesterday and I wanted to follow up. My colleague, Ryan Kane, was looking into this issue as well and we agreed after looking at the order that the BEAD program appears to be safe for now. We are continuing to monitor this EO and others with our multistate groups and will reach back out as things progress. Please feel free to contact Ryan (copied) and I directly if there is anything else we can do to help.

Best,

Jon

Jonathan Rose | Solicitor General
Office of the Attorney General | Appellate Unit
109 State Street, 3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT 05609
(802)793-1646 | jonathan.rose@vermont.gov



From: Hallquist, Christine <Christine.Hallquist@vermont.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 1:56 PM
To: Clark, Charity <Charity.R.Clark@vermont.gov>; Farnham, Douglas <Douglas.Farnham@vermont.gov>
Cc: Clithero, Toni H <Toni.Clithero@vermont.gov>; Fish, Robert <Robert.Fish@vermont.gov>; Johnson, Kerrick <Kerrick.Johnson@vermont.gov>
Subject: RE: Concerned

On a conference call now – BEAD program is safe. No word on Digital Equity program (although skepticism that it will survive).

Just received this as well - [BREAKING: BEAD Spending Safe from Energy Executive Order, White House Says](#)

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: Hallquist, Christine
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 8:29 AM

To: Clark, Charity <Charity.R.Clark@vermont.gov>; Farnham, Douglas
<Douglas.Farnham@vermont.gov>

Cc: Clithero, Toni H <Toni.Clithero@vermont.gov>; Fish, Robert <Robert.Fish@vermont.gov>

Subject: Concerned

I have reached out to others over the past 24 hours, and it appears that this Executive Order is creating a high level of confusion in the BEAD program. We have reached out to our Federal Program Officer for guidance. However, some of the states interpret this order to mean they cannot draw down any additional funds from the IJA program. This poses financial risk to the VCBB and the state of Vermont.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/unleashing-american-energy/>

Sec. 7. Terminating the Green New Deal.

All agencies shall immediately pause the disbursement of funds appropriated through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-169) or the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58), including but not limited to funds for electric vehicle charging stations made available through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program and the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program, and shall review their processes, policies, and programs for issuing grants, loans, contracts, or any other financial disbursements of such appropriated funds for consistency with the law and the policy outlined in section 2 of this order. Within 90 days of the date of this order, all agency heads shall submit a report to the Director of the NEC and Director of OMB that details the findings of this review, including recommendations to enhance their alignment with the policy set forth in section 2. No funds identified in this subsection (a) shall be disbursed by a given agency until the Director of OMB and Assistant to the President for Economic Policy have determined that such disbursements are consistent with any review recommendations they have chosen to adopt.

When procuring goods and services, making decisions about leases, and making other arrangements that result in disbursements of Federal funds, agencies shall prioritize cost-effectiveness, American workers and businesses, and the sensible use of taxpayer money, to the greatest extent. The Director of OMB shall finalize and circulate guidelines to further implement this subsection.

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: [Hallquist, Christine](#)
To: [John Windhausen](#)
Subject: RE: No BEAD pause
Date: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 2:15:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Excellent news. Thank you.

With warm regards,
Christine Hallquist
Executive Director
christine.hallquist@vermont.gov
(802)636-7853
[Vermont Community Broadband Board](#)



From: John Windhausen <jwindhausen@shlb.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 2:11 PM
To: SHLB Broadband Deployment <broadband-Deployment@shlb.org>
Subject: No BEAD pause

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Dear SHLB Broadband Deployment Group.

Yesterday we wondered if the new Executive Order pausing federal energy funding also applied to BEAD. Today we got a good answer: No

BREAKING: BEAD Spending Safe from Energy Executive Order, White House Says

The White House issued a memo clarifying that a call to pause Infrastructure Act funding applied only to energy projects.

“This pause only applies to funds supporting programs, projects, or activities that may be implicated by the policy established in Section 2 of the

order,” **Matthew Vaeth**, acting director of the Office of Management and Budget, wrote [in a memo](#) posted Wednesday. That section of [the order](#) deals with energy production on federal land, electric vehicle policies, and household appliance manufacturing. It does not mention broadband.

Thanks to Broadband Breakfast for [reporting this](#).
John

--

Executive Director

John Windhausen

202-256-9616

jwindhausen@shlb.org



Bridging the digital divide
one anchor institution at a time.



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You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "SHLB Broadband Deployment" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to broadband-Deployment+unsubscribe@shlb.org.

To view this discussion visit [https://groups.google.com/a/shlb.org/d/msgid/broadband-Deployment/CAM8zxLv-](https://groups.google.com/a/shlb.org/d/msgid/broadband-Deployment/CAM8zxLv-228L6toXQ8GxzX_3W4w1RA10xkDB0hR7d9Rb19knkQ%40mail.gmail.com)

[228L6toXQ8GxzX_3W4w1RA10xkDB0hR7d9Rb19knkQ%40mail.gmail.com](https://groups.google.com/a/shlb.org/d/msgid/broadband-Deployment/CAM8zxLv-228L6toXQ8GxzX_3W4w1RA10xkDB0hR7d9Rb19knkQ%40mail.gmail.com).

For more options, visit <https://groups.google.com/a/shlb.org/d/optout>.

From: [Kathryn de Wit](#)
Cc: [Jake Varn](#); [Sarah Ali](#); [Leslie Siphers](#)
Subject: Re: Updates from DC + recommendations to Commerce, NTIA
Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:25:01 AM
Attachments: [FILE 7343.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hey folks - Well, in a quick pivot from Friday: we have a new EO. I'm sure y'all have a copy, but I've attached it in case you don't. I'm writing with an unhelpful message: we're in the process of figuring out what we know and what may effect your work - from ARPA to IJJA.

We'll circle back with updates - focusing on the knowns - once we have them. Additionally, we'll update y'all on how we plan to respond, particularly in light of tomorrow's confirmation hearing. In the meantime, passing along the advice I got from our lobbyists this morning: how will a pause effect the work toward universal broadband access? And how long until that pause causes irreparable harm?

For those of you who don't know me well, you should know that dry humor and sarcasm are my default. So, not surprisingly, I was coached that my response of "six months ago?" won't help. You're welcome.

One thing we DO know: Sen. Cruz is preparing to present legislation on USF reform on Feb. 5. Apparently, folks are already angry with his leadership (he's proposing to change Committee rules for them to claim quorum without any Dems present) so I'm curious how this will land, particularly with members who have been working on the USF task force since last year.

I haven't read the legislation yet, but will share some readouts when we have it.

Will touch base later -
KdW

Kathryn de Wit

From: Kathryn de Wit <kdewit@pewtrusts.org>
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2025 5:13 PM
Cc: Jake Varn <jvarn@pewtrusts.org>; Sarah Ali <sali2@pewtrusts.org>; Leslie Siphers <lsiphers@pewtrusts.org>
Subject: Updates from DC + recommendations to Commerce, NTIA

Hi all,

As we near the end of the first week of the new administration, I just wanted to offer you all a quick update on what we've been hearing and how we plan to engage in the days and

weeks ahead. Before I start, I wanted to say another thank you to the offices that participated in our roundtable on December 6th. It was an enlightening conversation, and we look forward to refining the vision and action plan with you in the months to come. Now, down to business:

No immediate impact from Executive orders: We have been closely monitoring the slew of Executive Orders that have been issued since Monday. While there was concern that the [Unleashing American Energy Executive Order](#) would pause all disbursement of funds authorized by the IIJA and IRA, OMB has [since clarified](#) that the freeze seemingly only applies to elements of those bills that impact certain parts of the energy and efficiency sector. We assume more EOs will follow and will continue to track them as they are issued, and let you know if we come across any relevant actions.

Letter on programmatic improvements to BEAD, DEA: We are finalizing a letter that will be sent to Howard Lutnick, Acting Secretary of Commerce, summarizing opportunities to accelerate the rollout of BEAD and DEA funds. This will be shared in advance of his confirmation hearing on January 29th. To those who participated in our December 6th roundtable, this letter aligns with much of the discussion we had that day. I've included a summary of the main points at the bottom of this email, but I do want to emphasize that we are not claiming to represent the perspective of all states - we are summarizing feedback from conversations with all of you in recent months.

Elevating Governor outreach: Governors have begun formal outreach to the new administration, including expressing their support for BEAD and their suggestions for changes. That includes Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry. I've attached the letter and the Politico coverage for your reference. We suspect other Governor's offices may soon follow suit and help set the stage for a larger discussion around the program. If any of you plan to send similar letters to the administration and are willing to share, we would greatly appreciate it. We hope to share those and other letters with members of Congress and advocates, with the twin goals of emphasizing bipartisan governor support and strengthening our aim to reconstitute state authority. Why? Because all of you have different needs and require the flexibility to address them in due course.

Working with staff on Capitol Hill and partners in DC: Pew is helping staff on both sides of the aisle prepare for Acting Secretary Lutnick's confirmation hearing on Jan. 29. That includes sharing the letter on suggestions for BEAD and DEA and reminding them that we all share a goal: connecting every American to high-speed internet. Additionally, we'll share your accomplishments and affirm that while improvements can be made, you are poised and ready to implement funds - you just need approval to do it. Moving forward, we'll continue working with staff to learn about plans for possible legislation, hearings, or agency level actions. We will keep you in the loop on what we're hearing as we have these conversations, and hope you'll do the same. Know that we're also sharing these core messages with whoever will listen, including in the media (even though it is, admittedly, less exciting than quotes from others foretelling doom). That includes a panel on Jan. 28, where Misty Ann, Chandler, Brian, and I will be talking all things BEAD. It's at 12 pm EST and hosted by Microsoft Airband and the BGR Group. It's closed to the press and the invitation is attached.

RSVP by emailing: bgrstateandlocal@bgrdc.com.

As always, we value your perspective and are honored to have your trust and partnership. If you have any specific suggestions, examples, or challenges you'd like us to elevate in conversations and outreach, please send them along. You can also do that during BETI office hours on Friday, Jan 31 from 2 - 3 pm EST. If you are not already on that list and you'd like an invitation, please let us know. And, of course, we hope to see you at SBLN next month. Happy to connect in-person while you're here!

All the best,

Kathryn

Key points in draft letter to the Acting Secretary of Commerce

NTIA and the Trump Administration should consider the steps it can take to:

- Improve transparency and consistency in decision-making, including making public all past waivers issued to states and ensuring that guidance and decisions are consistently shared and applied across all states.
- Issue guidance in a timely fashion, so states and their partners – especially internet service providers – can fully understand the standards they will be held to.
- Better collaborate with other federal agencies to resolve data discrepancies and barriers to deployment, such as decisions on permits.
- Position states as partners to solve long-standing challenges in federal broadband policy.

Kathryn de Wit

Project Director, Broadband Access Initiative
The Pew Charitable Trusts
901 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20004

o: 202-540-6505 | m: 412-979-0714 | e: kdewit@pewtrusts.org

From: [Kathryn de Wit](#)
Subject: Readouts from Lutnick hearing, SBLN meeting coordination
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:22:45 PM
Attachments: [Top tech takeaways from the Howard Lutnick hearing - POLITICO PRO.pdf](#)

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Good evening, folks -

You'll receive your usual monthly BETI newsletter from Jake tomorrow but given how much has happened over the past week (/24 hours) I wanted to share some updates tonight.

As I expect everyone has seen, the OMB memo pausing the disbursement and obligation of federal funds was released, then clarified, then temporarily blocked by a judge, and as of now, rescinded by OMB, while the underlying executive orders remain in place. The implications of that are currently unclear, and we're hoping to learn more as this review process shifts over to the agencies. Once we have any formal guidance or clarification, we'll be sure to share!

Reminder:

BETI office hours are this Friday, January 31 at 2 p.m. EST. If you do not have the link, please let me know and we will add you.

Lutnick Confirmation Hearing:

For those that missed today's Senate Commerce confirmation hearing for President Trump's nominee, Howard Lutnick, to serve as the Secretary of the Department of Commerce, there were a few pertinent highlights for state broadband offices.

- Mr. Lutnick repeatedly emphasized a desire to get the "benefit of the bargain" and seemed to prioritize cost efficiency and effectiveness over any explicit preferences for any particular technology.
- Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV) asked if Mr. Lutnick could commit that Nevada's approved final proposal would be executed. Mr. Lutnick replied that he is committed to broadband and wants to ensure the Nevada proposal was done rigorously and would be the "most efficient" way to connect Nevadans to broadband. However, he noted that if there were mistakes, he would like to see them resolved.
- Senator John Thune (R-SD) asked if Mr. Lutnick could ensure BEAD would "only" be used for broadband infrastructure builds, to which Mr. Lutnick emphatically responded with one word, "Absolutely." It is unclear if this is a direct reference to specific nondeployment uses or the Digital Equity Act.
- Lastly, the Digital Equity Act was not a prominent subject of the hearing, but Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) asked Mr. Lutnick if he would execute the funds Congress had passed for digital skills to get online, he responded, "What you [Congress] have appropriated efficiently and effectively, I will [execute]."

I have also attached a copy of Politico Pro's summary of the hearing. If you have any additional questions, please let us know.

State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN) Meeting:

Given all the uncertainty faced by government departments and agencies, we are floating the idea of holding a Pew-hosted multi-hour meeting next week during the time frame of the SBLN meeting.

We will discuss the idea and what you'd like to get out of this meeting during the BETI call on Friday. If you would be interested in attending a potential meeting, please respond to this email.

Letter on Programmatic Improvements to BEAD, DEA:

As I shared in my Friday email, we've been in the process of finalizing a letter summarizing opportunities to accelerate the rollout of BEAD and DEA funds, aligning with discussion from our December 6th roundtable. Once this letter has been finalized and sent to officials at NTIA, we will forward it to all of you. Additionally, it will be shared with key offices on the Hill, including members of the Senate Commerce House Energy and Commerce Committees. The letter will also be shared with our partners and other stakeholders.

We have heard from a few offices that there is some potential interest in organizing a letter from the states themselves. We are happy to discuss that on Friday and/or next week, noting that we'll need to clarify a process points, including state-level approvals, signatories, and consensus on content.

As always, please feel free to call or email with any questions. Otherwise, you'll hear from me soon.
Kathryn

Kathryn de Wit

Project Director, Broadband Access Initiative
The Pew Charitable Trusts
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Top tech takeaways from the Howard Lutnick hearing

By Mohar Chatterjee , John Hendel , Christine Mui

01/29/2025 03:18 PM EST Updated: 01/29/2025 03:43 PM EST

Commerce Secretary nominee Howard Lutnick stands to inherit a huge portfolio of national policy on technology, telecom and competition with China — and until Wednesday morning, he'd had little to say on any of it.

That ended fast.

The Senate Commerce Committee's hearing on Lutnick's nomination turned into a nearly end-to-end blitz of policy questions on complex and politically controversial issues like the global tech rivalry, American broadband and microchip spending, the Pentagon vs. telecom companies and "woke AI." Here's what his hearing revealed:

— **On spectrum, private industry may have a leg up on the Pentagon.** Lutnick signaled he may be a powerful ally to top Senate Republicans in their quest to free up more wireless spectrum for the commercial sector.

"There's enormous amounts of spectrum held by the Department of Defense," Lutnick said during Wednesday's hearing. "I'd like to try to help us drive some of that spectrum towards our businesses."

The Pentagon and Commerce Department have been in a years-long tug of war over the Pentagon's store of airwaves, which the Defense Department wants for security and military reasons, and the wireless industry says would help boost the nation's 5G and 6G ambitions. Republicans are also wrestling with whether to include spectrum provisions in their budget reconciliation package.

The Pentagon's supporters signaled they won't roll over. "I want to make it clear to you that DOD airwaves are not lying dormant, and that proposals to clear them would jeopardize our national security," Sen. [Deb Fischer](#) (R-Neb.), a senior member of both the Commerce and Armed Services committees, warned Lutnick. And after Sen. [Maria Cantwell](#) read [a POLITICO headline out loud](#) to Lutnick, he stressed that he'd work closely with the Pentagon on any plans.

— **Full speed on broadband rollout — without Biden's rules.** The Trump administration wants to continue the Commerce Department's landmark \$42 billion broadband expansion program [but with changes in how it's managed](#), Lutnick told senators.

"It's time for a new commerce secretary to get broadband out to people and give you the benefit of the bargain," Lutnick said.

Lutnick's comments give the clearest sense of how the Trump administration will run the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program, which has faced [many questions](#) about its future since Election Day. Congress created the BEAD grant program in the 2021 infrastructure law, but [extensive planning and negotiation with the states](#) over grant conditions have meant that no households are yet connected to the internet using the money.

He stressed a desire to amp up BEAD's efficiency and cost-effectiveness. He also wants to give multiple technologies — from satellite to wireless to fiber — a fair shot in seeking the cash. This could [mean more money](#) for Trump-aligned tech billionaire Elon Musk, who runs the satellite broadband service Starlink.

— **DeepSeek is driving the AI conversation in Washington** — but it's anyone's guess how the real policy will shake out. And American tech companies could still be in the political wind.

Asked repeatedly about the sudden rise of DeepSeek, China's super-successful new AI app, Lutnick fell back on some existing policy ideas — but also tagged U.S. tech companies as part of the problem.

Lutnick [singled out two companies](#): Meta and Nvidia. “We need to stop helping [China]. Meta’s open platform lets DeepSeek rely on it. Nvidia’s chips, which they bought tons of and they sound their ways around it, drive their DeepSeek model. It’s got to end,” he said.

Lutnick also took a hardline stance against [alleged Chinese intellectual property](#) and hardware theft.

— **AI standards still matter, but it’s unclear how they’ll be set.** Trump is rolling back most of Biden’s AI safety initiatives, but there’s still a question of what happens to the U.S. AI Safety Institute, a new body that’s supposed to set global standards through an American lens.

Offered the direct chance to say the institute would survive, Lutnick swerved and didn’t commit. But he wasn’t totally hands-off on AI — and offered clear support for Washington’s role in setting technical standards for AI.

“I think AI standards along the lines of that gold standard [for cybersecurity], that same model, I think will be very effective,” he said.

And Washington’s conservative swing will clearly shape what those standards look like: In response to an aggressive push from Senate Commerce Chair [Ted Cruz](#) (R-Texas), Lutnick committed to ending the AISI’s standard-setting work in areas like climate change assessments for AI systems and the potential for AI models to produce misinformation.

— **Chips spending looks safe.** Trump on Monday dismissed the landmark 2022 CHIPS and Science Act as “that ridiculous program that Biden has” in a meeting with House Republicans — and threatened to replace it with higher tariffs on foreign-made chips instead.

Lutnick was far more reassuring. He called the law an “[excellent down payment](#),” and said he would review but continue two of the Commerce Department’s most popular programs: the rollout of \$50 billion in federal microchip subsidies and [the Tech Hubs effort](#) to spread innovation to regional hubs across America’s heartland.

He indicated an interest in speeding up the disbursement of grants, though he said he will need time to examine contracts the Biden administration negotiated and signed with chipmakers.

Lutnick even appeared open to the idea of a CHIPS 2.0 and eventually mirroring the law’s industrial policy approach to support other critical technologies.

“We need manufacturing of semiconductors in America, and I’m going to do everything I can to make that happen,” Lutnick told the committee. “After that, we’re going to drive the supply chain to the United States of America.”

That’s a favorable sign for House members, who reintroduced a bipartisan, chip industry-backed bill this week to expand tax breaks for more of the supply chain. They’re hoping Republicans will consider the proposal in their upcoming reconciliation fight.

One moment of tension: Lutnick refused to commit to honoring final awards for chipmakers before looking over the Biden administration’s paperwork. At Sen. [Ed Markey](#) (D-Mass.)’s behest, he did agree to “rigorously” enforce terms companies agreed to in them. Those could include diversity, labor, childcare and [other requirements that progressives secured](#), but Republicans including Cruz have railed against.

On a smaller but more broad-based facet of the law — the “Tech Hubs” innovation program — Lutnick was open to a request from Sen. [Roger Wicker](#) (R-Miss.) to push its [limited money](#) toward new hubs, instead of existing ones. Science advocates [want the opposite](#), warning that the program will be small-balled if the money is spread too thin. Lutnick sided with Wicker, agreeing to grow Tech Hubs and take a closer look at previously rejected applications in the Southeast region.