

North Carolina Receives Approval for Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program

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The Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has approved North Carolina’s Initial Proposal for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. This approval marks a significant step towards closing the digital divide in North Carolina and ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet service.

The BEAD program, authorized by President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, provides \$42.45 billion in state grants to expand broadband access. North Carolina was allocated over \$1.5 billion to deploy or upgrade high-speed Internet networks in unserved and underserved areas.

“In the 21st century, a reliable Internet connection is a critical necessity that enables access to jobs, health care, and education. Thanks to the Biden-Harris Administration’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Department of Commerce is ensuring everyone in North Carolina and across the country has access to quality, affordable high-speed Internet,” **said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo.** “Congratulations to the team in North Carolina. We look forward to working with you to ensure that everyone in the state is connected.”

Once deployment goals are met, any remaining funding can be used for high-speed Internet adoption, training, and workforce development efforts.

“Today, North Carolina can move their Internet for All efforts from planning to action,” **said Assistant**

Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator Alan Davidson. “I congratulate the North Carolina Department of Information Technology for developing a strong proposal for how they will connect all of their residents to high-speed Internet service.”

BEAD-eligible entities, including the 56 states, territories, and the District of Columbia, were required to submit Initial Proposals detailing their plans to spend BEAD allocations. All states submitted their proposals by December 27, 2023.

NTIA is providing updates on the status of all 56 states and territories’ Initial Proposals.

Within a year of Initial Proposal approval, states must submit a Final Proposal outlining the subgrantee selection process and how they will ensure universal coverage.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes a historic \$65 billion investment to expand broadband access across the United States. NTIA has launched several new high-speed Internet grant programs funded by the law to build infrastructure, create more affordable service options, and address digital equity and inclusion needs.