



# NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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## NEW REPORT: MORE THAN 20 MILLION AMERICANS DENIED ACCESS TO JOBS & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY WITHIN BROADBAND ECONOMY

*Progress made, but rural communities across the nation continue to lack access to broadband*

*More than 100 million Americans do not subscribe to broadband*

Washington, D.C. – The latest [Broadband Progress Report](#) to Congress from the Federal Communications Commission reveals that **approximately 26 million Americans, mostly in rural communities located in every region of the country, are denied access to the jobs and economic opportunity made possible by broadband.**

While the infrastructure of high-speed Internet is unavailable to those Americans, the FCC report also finds **that approximately one-third of Americans do not subscribe to broadband, even when it's available.** This suggests that barriers to adoption – such as cost, low digital literacy, and concerns about privacy – remain too high. The Report also notes **limited broadband capacity for schools and libraries as a further indicator that broadband is not being reasonably and timely deployed** and is not available to all Americans.

Without action by the FCC in partnership with the states and the private sector, prospects for broadband service in many of the areas cited in the Report will remain unacceptably low. **The Report finds the problem especially acute among low-income Americans, African-Americans, Hispanics, seniors, and residents of Tribal areas.** Congress recognized the importance of broadband in Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which directs the FCC to take immediate action to accelerate broadband deployment when it is not “reasonable and timely.”

The Report emphasizes that, notwithstanding our continuing broadband challenges, **significant progress has been made over the past few years in both the private and public sectors.** Despite the difficult economy, the private sector continues to invest tens of billions of dollars in broadband infrastructure each year - \$65 billion in capital expenditures in 2010 alone - expanding capacity, increasing speeds on fixed networks and rolling out next-generation mobile services like 4G.

Since first finding in the 2010 Report to Congress that deployment is not reasonable and timely, the FCC has taken a number of steps to accelerate national broadband deployment and adoption.

These actions include reforming the E-rate program to enable schools and libraries to get higher-capacity, lower-cost access to the Internet; launching its “Learning On-the-Go” pilot program at schools and libraries across the country to advance the use of digital textbooks and mobile Internet access for interactive learning outside the classroom; launching a Broadband Acceleration Initiative to remove barriers and speed deployment of robust, affordable broadband; moving to reform the Universal Service Fund and intercarrier compensation system to better incentivize deployment of broadband to underserved communities; and unleashing additional spectrum for broadband. The FCC continues to aggressively pursue its broadband agenda, which is crucial to job creation and America’s global competitiveness.

Broadband can help create hundreds of thousands of new jobs for Americans in the coming years, **including more than 200,000 jobs through investment in 4G wireless technologies alone**. The new and growing “apps economy” has drawn tens of thousands of developers and companies, including startups attracting significant private investment that creates new jobs.

This year’s Report relies on the nation’s first collection of data about actual broadband deployment, rather than the estimates based on broadband adoption used by previous reports. The new deployment data was collected at the direction of Congress by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to create the [National Broadband Map](#). See the [Seventh Broadband Progress Report page](#) for more information.

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