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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC MAKES AVAILABLE OVER \$311 MILLION FOR BROADBAND  
IN 36 STATES, WHILE TAKING STEPS TO CLEAN UP  
THE RURAL DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FUND PROGRAM**

WASHINGTON, July 26, 2021—The FCC today took its first steps to move forward with funding new broadband deployments across the country through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. The FCC announced that it is ready to authorize over \$311 million in broadband funding across 36 states through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. At the same time, the agency took steps to clean up issues with the program’s design originating from its adoption in 2020.

“This is a significant down payment on broadband deployment,” said **FCC Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel**. “Today’s announcement means that help is on the way for hundreds of thousands of Americans without access to broadband.”

Today’s action represents the first funding to be approved through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. As a result of [today’s announcement](#), 48 broadband providers will bring 1 Gbps broadband speeds to nearly 200,000 homes and businesses over the next 10 years.

At the same time, the FCC also took steps to clean up the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund program. In light of complaints that the program was poised to fund broadband to parking lots and well-served urban areas, the FCC sent [letters](#) to 197 winning bidders. The letters offer providers an opportunity to withdraw their funding requests from those places already with service or where significant questions of waste have been raised. Next, the FCC made clear that it will not tolerate any provider participating in the program that is not serious about providing broadband service or has not made appropriate efforts to secure state approvals. To this end, the FCC [rejected](#) requests from AB Indiana in Florida and LTD Broadband in California, Oklahoma, and Kansas to waive program deadlines, in light of their failure to act in a timely way to seek state certification.

“This program can do great things, but it requires thoughtful oversight,” said **Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel**. “That’s why we are refocusing the program on unserved areas and putting winning bidders on notice of their obligation to ensure that support goes to the areas that need it. And for those applicants who are dragging their feet or can’t meet their obligations, follow the rules or we will disqualify you and move on.”

The FCC also released an [initial list](#) of areas where winning bidders have chosen not to pursue buildout. These areas will immediately become available for other broadband funding opportunities and the defaulting bidders will be subject to enforcement penalties as warranted. The Commission continues to carefully review long-form applications of other winning bidders

that were previously [announced](#) to ensure they meet the technical, financial and operational capabilities to comply with program obligations.

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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).*