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**For Immediate Release****FCC ANNOUNCES \$554 MILLION FOR BROADBAND IN 19 STATES THROUGH RURAL DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FUND PROGRAM*****FCC Continues Ongoing Work to Clean Up and Refocus Program So Funding Goes to Qualified Providers in Areas That Need Broadband***

WASHINGTON, October 20, 2021—The FCC today announced that it is ready to authorize \$554,150,641 million in its third round of funding for new broadband deployments through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund. Together with two prior funding wave announcements, the Commission has now announced over \$1 billion in funding to winning bidders for new deployments. In this funding wave, 11 broadband providers will bring fiber-to-the-home gigabit broadband service to over 180,000 locations in 19 states. The Commission also denied several waiver petitions by companies that did not diligently pursue their applications.

“This is good news for consumers waiting far too long for broadband in parts of the country that have yet to be served,” said **Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel**. “Broadband is an essential service and during the pandemic we’ve seen just how critical it is for families, schools, hospitals, and businesses to have affordable internet access. Thanks to the hard work of our dedicated FCC staff who are carefully reviewing applications and working to clean up the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, this program will build new broadband infrastructure in areas that truly need it.”

The 19 states slated for today’s funding are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin. Michigan and Georgia received the most funding in this wave, \$188 million and \$149 million, respectively. The Commission continues close review of the applications of other winning bidders that were previously announced to ensure they meet the program’s technical, financial, and legal requirements.

The FCC also continued to work to ensure that funding only supports providers that comply with program requirements. The FCC denied LTD Broadband’s petition seeking waiver of the deadline to be designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier in Iowa, Nebraska, and North Dakota, and denied NW Fiber’s petition seeking waiver of the deadline for submitting a post-auction long form application.

These efforts continue the agency’s work to clean up the program to ensure that funding goes to unserved areas that need broadband.

As part of that clean-up process, the Commission has taken a number of actions, including:

- Sending letters to 197 applicants concerning areas where there was evidence of existing service or questions of waste. Bidders have already chosen not to pursue support in 5,094 census blocks in response to the Commission's letters.
- Denying waivers for winning bidders that have not made appropriate efforts to secure state approvals or prosecute their applications. These bidders would have otherwise received more than \$344 million.
- Publishing a list of areas where providers had defaulted, thereby making those places available for other broadband funding opportunities.
- Conducting an exhaustive technical, financial, and legal review of all winning bidders.

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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).*