



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Rick Allen
U.S. House of Representatives
570 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Allen:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

As Congress recognized with passage of the Broadband DATA Act in March 2020, the first step for connecting all Americans is ensuring that we have accurate information about where broadband service is and is not available across the country. With better data we can target our policymaking efforts and financial resources, including the FCC's universal service funding, to those unserved and underserved areas of the country where support is needed most. Better data will also help other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Tribal entities target their own efforts.

We have talked about this problem for years but lacked the necessary focus and determination to get it done. The good news is that in December 2020 Congress provided the FCC with the necessary funding to implement the Broadband DATA Act. This made it possible for the agency to develop the complex databases, systems, and processes required to collect, validate, and make the data available. After I became Acting Chairwoman, one of the very first actions I took was to assess the status of this effort. While this review made clear we had an enormous amount of work to do, I am pleased to report that we have made significant progress since January.

In my first meeting as Acting Chairwoman, I announced the formation of the Broadband Data Task Force to coordinate and expedite the design and construction of new systems for collecting and verifying broadband deployment data. The Task Force is leading a cross-agency effort to implement the requirements of the Broadband DATA Act and kick-start our work to more accurately measure and reflect our nation's broadband needs.

Following the creation of the Task Force, we have made significant progress on standing-up the new Broadband Data Collection (BDC) systems and processes. For example, we retained an expert data architect to work with the Commission's own data and IT systems specialists to design and build a prototype of a data flow structure and system for the BDC, and on July 2, 2021 awarded a contract to build that data platform. The BDC will consist of a complex, interrelated set of geospatial information systems and processes to collect deployment data from internet service providers, verified coverage data from federal, state, local, and Tribal entities, and (in certain circumstances) other third parties, challenge data, and crowdsourced data. I am pleased to report that our data architect and staff were able to move the design process ahead on a very tight schedule and our decision to contract with the same firm to build the IT platform and systems will create efficiencies that save a significant amount of time in the development timeline. There is still a substantial amount of additional system development work, user acceptance testing, and independent verification and validation left to be done prior to launching the BDC system, but we are moving forward as quickly as possible.

At the same time, we are conducting a competitive bidding process for the creation of the Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric, a common dataset of all locations in the United States where fixed broadband internet access service can be installed. This competitive bidding process is specifically required in the Broadband DATA Act. To comply with this process, we issued a Request for Information (RFI) and draft Statement of Objectives in early March and received multiple responses to the RFI. We held industry feedback sessions with multiple entities and, based on what we learned through the RFI process, we issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) on June 1, 2021. Responses to the RFP were due on July 1, 2021 and, in response to a pre-award protest filed by an offeror on July 30, 2021, the FCC delivered a revised RFP to all offerors on August 13, 2021. Revised proposals were due August 26, 2021 and we are expeditiously reviewing those responses, consistent with recommended government solicitation practices.

As a part of the framework we are developing, the FCC will empower state, local, and Tribal governments to verify and challenge, and thereby improve, the accuracy of the maps by sharing state and local data with the FCC. The good work and resources already invested by states like Georgia, such as the location-specific data for homes and businesses included in the Georgia Broadband Program's broadband map will assist us in verifying the data we collect and thereby ensuring that our maps are as accurate as possible. Indeed, in the Broadband DATA Act Congress instructed the FCC to develop a process to collect verified data for use in our coverage maps from the state, local, and Tribal governmental entities that are primarily responsible for mapping or tracking broadband internet access service coverage in their respective jurisdictions. We have engaged in discussions with a number of states and other governmental partners about the categories and types of data they have collected, including the data sources, methodologies, and level of granularity associated with the data, and whether they might share relevant data with the FCC consistent with their own licensing and privacy obligations. As our systems and data specifications are developed, we will continue to reach out to state, local, and Tribal partners to ensure that they are aware of the types and formats of data we will need to assure a consistent and standardized nationwide data collection. States with well-developed broadband data

collection programs—like Georgia’s—can help to inform these formats and specifications so that the FCC is best positioned to intake verified datasets for use in our coverage maps.

The Commission is also working to address the remaining legal and policy issues associated with implementing the challenge, crowdsource and verification processes. Most recently, the Task Force, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Office of Economics and Analytics, and Office of Engineering and Technology, issued a Public Notice seeking comment on the technical requirements for processing mobile broadband challenge and verification data—including processing of state and local government submissions. While the processes for third parties, including state, local and Tribal governments, to submit speed test data are relatively simple, the processing that will need to go on ‘under the hood’ at the Commission is quite complex. That’s why in addition to the detailed descriptions set forth in the public notice and technical appendix thereto, the Task Force also hosted an online webinar to explain these proposals and respond to questions from interested parties on August 12, 2021. Comments responding to the Public Notice were due by September 10, 2021 and reply comments were due by September 27, 2021. FCC staff are reviewing the record developed in response to this Public Notice and developing final specifications to ensure that the challenge, verification, and crowdsourcing processes will improve the FCC’s data on mobile broadband availability and serve the purposes envisioned in the Broadband DATA Act.

We have also stepped up our consumer outreach efforts to inform stakeholders of the progress made to date and to provide status updates on future work. We created a new public-facing website (<https://www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData>), which provides a go-to source for Commission orders, public notices, and other educational materials as they become available. As a component of this website, we have created a new public portal through which consumers can share their broadband experiences to help inform the work of the Task Force. We are also engaging in outreach to encourage Americans to download the FCC Speed Test app, which is currently used to collect speed test data as part of the FCC’s Measuring Broadband America program. The app enables consumers to test the performance of their mobile broadband networks, and provides the test results to the FCC while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of users. The FCC recently executed a contract modification with the app developer to update the app so that it can be used in the future as a platform for consumers to challenge provider-submitted maps when the Broadband Data Collection systems become available.

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and provide more precise and consistent mobile coverage information for the Georgia Broadband Map program and other state, local, Tribal governments, consumers, and other third parties. This map is now available at www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData/MobileMaps.

I hope that you find this information helpful. We will be happy to provide updates as our work progresses and we have new information to share. I look forward to working with you and others in Congress as we continue to improve the Commission's broadband deployment data.

Sincerely,

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Jon Ossoff
United States Senate
825 B&C Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Ossoff:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Raphael G. Warnock
United States Senate
B40D Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warnock:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Earl L. Carter
U.S. House of Representatives
2432 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Carter:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

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I hope that you find this information helpful. We will be happy to provide updates as our work progresses and we have new information to share. I look forward to working with you and others in Congress as we continue to improve the Commission's broadband deployment data.

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Jessica Rosenworcel



OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop
U.S. House of Representatives
2407 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Bishop:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

As Congress recognized with passage of the Broadband DATA Act in March 2020, the first step for connecting all Americans is ensuring that we have accurate information about where broadband service is and is not available across the country. With better data we can target our policymaking efforts and financial resources, including the FCC's universal service funding, to those unserved and underserved areas of the country where support is needed most. Better data will also help other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Tribal entities target their own efforts.

We have talked about this problem for years but lacked the necessary focus and determination to get it done. The good news is that in December 2020 Congress provided the FCC with the necessary funding to implement the Broadband DATA Act. This made it possible for the agency to develop the complex databases, systems, and processes required to collect, validate, and make the data available. After I became Acting Chairwoman, one of the very first actions I took was to assess the status of this effort. While this review made clear we had an enormous amount of work to do, I am pleased to report that we have made significant progress since January.

In my first meeting as Acting Chairwoman, I announced the formation of the Broadband Data Task Force to coordinate and expedite the design and construction of new systems for collecting and verifying broadband deployment data. The Task Force is leading a cross-agency effort to implement the requirements of the Broadband DATA Act and kick-start our work to more accurately measure and reflect our nation's broadband needs.

Following the creation of the Task Force, we have made significant progress on standing-up the new Broadband Data Collection (BDC) systems and processes. For example, we retained an expert data architect to work with the Commission's own data and IT systems specialists to design and build a prototype of a data flow structure and system for the BDC, and on July 2, 2021 awarded a contract to build that data platform. The BDC will consist of a complex, interrelated set of geospatial information systems and processes to collect deployment data from internet service providers, verified coverage data from federal, state, local, and Tribal entities, and (in certain circumstances) other third parties, challenge data, and crowdsourced data. I am pleased to report that our data architect and staff were able to move the design process ahead on a very tight schedule and our decision to contract with the same firm to build the IT platform and systems will create efficiencies that save a significant amount of time in the development timeline. There is still a substantial amount of additional system development work, user acceptance testing, and independent verification and validation left to be done prior to launching the BDC system, but we are moving forward as quickly as possible.

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As a part of the framework we are developing, the FCC will empower state, local, and Tribal governments to verify and challenge, and thereby improve, the accuracy of the maps by sharing state and local data with the FCC. The good work and resources already invested by states like Georgia, such as the location-specific data for homes and businesses included in the Georgia Broadband Program's broadband map will assist us in verifying the data we collect and thereby ensuring that our maps are as accurate as possible. Indeed, in the Broadband DATA Act Congress instructed the FCC to develop a process to collect verified data for use in our coverage maps from the state, local, and Tribal governmental entities that are primarily responsible for mapping or tracking broadband internet access service coverage in their respective jurisdictions. We have engaged in discussions with a number of states and other governmental partners about the categories and types of data they have collected, including the data sources, methodologies, and level of granularity associated with the data, and whether they might share relevant data with the FCC consistent with their own licensing and privacy obligations. As our systems and data specifications are developed, we will continue to reach out to state, local, and Tribal partners to ensure that they are aware of the types and formats of data we will need to assure a consistent and standardized nationwide data collection. States with well-developed broadband data

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Drew Ferguson
U.S. House of Representatives
1032 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Ferguson:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Austin Scott
U.S. House of Representatives
2417 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Scott:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Jody Hice
U.S. House of Representatives
404 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Hice:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

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The Commission is also working to address the remaining legal and policy issues associated with implementing the challenge, crowdsource and verification processes. Most recently, the Task Force, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Office of Economics and Analytics, and Office of Engineering and Technology, issued a Public Notice seeking comment on the technical requirements for processing mobile broadband challenge and verification data—including processing of state and local government submissions. While the processes for third parties, including state, local and Tribal governments, to submit speed test data are relatively simple, the processing that will need to go on ‘under the hood’ at the Commission is quite complex. That’s why in addition to the detailed descriptions set forth in the public notice and technical appendix thereto, the Task Force also hosted an online webinar to explain these proposals and respond to questions from interested parties on August 12, 2021. Comments responding to the Public Notice were due by September 10, 2021 and reply comments were due by September 27, 2021. FCC staff are reviewing the record developed in response to this Public Notice and developing final specifications to ensure that the challenge, verification, and crowdsourcing processes will improve the FCC’s data on mobile broadband availability and serve the purposes envisioned in the Broadband DATA Act.

We have also stepped up our consumer outreach efforts to inform stakeholders of the progress made to date and to provide status updates on future work. We created a new public-facing website (<https://www.fcc.gov/BroadbandData>), which provides a go-to source for Commission orders, public notices, and other educational materials as they become available. As a component of this website, we have created a new public portal through which consumers can share their broadband experiences to help inform the work of the Task Force. We are also engaging in outreach to encourage Americans to download the FCC Speed Test app, which is currently used to collect speed test data as part of the FCC’s Measuring Broadband America program. The app enables consumers to test the performance of their mobile broadband networks, and provides the test results to the FCC while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of users. The FCC recently executed a contract modification with the app developer to update the app so that it can be used in the future as a platform for consumers to challenge provider-submitted maps when the Broadband Data Collection systems become available.

In addition, we are working with a number of broadband providers to obtain more granular and consistent real-world data to help expedite our development of the BDC IT systems and data structures that will support the new collection and to inform our effort to develop training and other outreach to providers in advance of their BDC filings. As part of this effort, on August 6 we released new 4G LTE coverage maps based on the new BDC parameters using data submitted voluntarily by AT&T Mobility, T-Mobile, UScellular, and Verizon Wireless. In addition to providing the FCC with real-world data that we can use to build and test our BDC systems, we created a public map that shows, for the first time, consistent nationwide 4G LTE mobile coverage according to the BDC parameters. We hope that this new map will supplement

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I hope that you find this information helpful. We will be happy to provide updates as our work progresses and we have new information to share. I look forward to working with you and others in Congress as we continue to improve the Commission's broadband deployment data.

Sincerely,

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Andrew Clyde
U.S. House of Representatives
521 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Clyde:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

As Congress recognized with passage of the Broadband DATA Act in March 2020, the first step for connecting all Americans is ensuring that we have accurate information about where broadband service is and is not available across the country. With better data we can target our policymaking efforts and financial resources, including the FCC's universal service funding, to those unserved and underserved areas of the country where support is needed most. Better data will also help other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Tribal entities target their own efforts.

We have talked about this problem for years but lacked the necessary focus and determination to get it done. The good news is that in December 2020 Congress provided the FCC with the necessary funding to implement the Broadband DATA Act. This made it possible for the agency to develop the complex databases, systems, and processes required to collect, validate, and make the data available. After I became Acting Chairwoman, one of the very first actions I took was to assess the status of this effort. While this review made clear we had an enormous amount of work to do, I am pleased to report that we have made significant progress since January.

In my first meeting as Acting Chairwoman, I announced the formation of the Broadband Data Task Force to coordinate and expedite the design and construction of new systems for collecting and verifying broadband deployment data. The Task Force is leading a cross-agency effort to implement the requirements of the Broadband DATA Act and kick-start our work to more accurately measure and reflect our nation's broadband needs.

Following the creation of the Task Force, we have made significant progress on standing-up the new Broadband Data Collection (BDC) systems and processes. For example, we retained an expert data architect to work with the Commission's own data and IT systems specialists to design and build a prototype of a data flow structure and system for the BDC, and on July 2, 2021 awarded a contract to build that data platform. The BDC will consist of a complex, interrelated set of geospatial information systems and processes to collect deployment data from internet service providers, verified coverage data from federal, state, local, and Tribal entities, and (in certain circumstances) other third parties, challenge data, and crowdsourced data. I am pleased to report that our data architect and staff were able to move the design process ahead on a very tight schedule and our decision to contract with the same firm to build the IT platform and systems will create efficiencies that save a significant amount of time in the development timeline. There is still a substantial amount of additional system development work, user acceptance testing, and independent verification and validation left to be done prior to launching the BDC system, but we are moving forward as quickly as possible.

At the same time, we are conducting a competitive bidding process for the creation of the Broadband Serviceable Location Fabric, a common dataset of all locations in the United States where fixed broadband internet access service can be installed. This competitive bidding process is specifically required in the Broadband DATA Act. To comply with this process, we issued a Request for Information (RFI) and draft Statement of Objectives in early March and received multiple responses to the RFI. We held industry feedback sessions with multiple entities and, based on what we learned through the RFI process, we issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) on June 1, 2021. Responses to the RFP were due on July 1, 2021 and, in response to a pre-award protest filed by an offeror on July 30, 2021, the FCC delivered a revised RFP to all offerors on August 13, 2021. Revised proposals were due August 26, 2021 and we are expeditiously reviewing those responses, consistent with recommended government solicitation practices.

As a part of the framework we are developing, the FCC will empower state, local, and Tribal governments to verify and challenge, and thereby improve, the accuracy of the maps by sharing state and local data with the FCC. The good work and resources already invested by states like Georgia, such as the location-specific data for homes and businesses included in the Georgia Broadband Program's broadband map will assist us in verifying the data we collect and thereby ensuring that our maps are as accurate as possible. Indeed, in the Broadband DATA Act Congress instructed the FCC to develop a process to collect verified data for use in our coverage maps from the state, local, and Tribal governmental entities that are primarily responsible for mapping or tracking broadband internet access service coverage in their respective jurisdictions. We have engaged in discussions with a number of states and other governmental partners about the categories and types of data they have collected, including the data sources, methodologies, and level of granularity associated with the data, and whether they might share relevant data with the FCC consistent with their own licensing and privacy obligations. As our systems and data specifications are developed, we will continue to reach out to state, local, and Tribal partners to ensure that they are aware of the types and formats of data we will need to assure a consistent and standardized nationwide data collection. States with well-developed broadband data

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Jessica Rosenworcel



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE
ACTING CHAIRWOMAN

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Barry Loudermilk
U.S. House of Representatives
2133 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Loudermilk:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's efforts to collect more precise and reliable broadband deployment data. Even before the global spread of COVID-19, broadband service had become vital for school, work, healthcare, and more. The pandemic has only magnified the need for high-speed connections and in the process has exposed that too many in the United States do not have access to broadband today. That is why I share your commitment to finding ways to ensure that 100 percent of Americans—including all Georgians—can access and afford high-speed, reliable broadband service, no matter who they are or where they live.

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