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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC ANNOUNCES \$200 MILLION FOR NEW BROADBAND DEPLOYMENTS THROUGH THE RURAL DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FUND AS AGENCY CONTINUES PROGRAM OVERSIGHT**

*To Date Program Has Committed Over \$5.2 Billion for Broadband Deployment to 3 Million Locations in 47 States and the Northern Mariana Islands*

WASHINGTON, May 3, 2022—The Federal Communications Commission today announced that it is ready to authorize \$199,336,695 through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund to fund new broadband deployments in 26 states and the Northern Mariana Islands bringing service to over 230,000 locations. This is the ninth round of program funding since July 2021, when the Commission announced the first approvals for applicant bids meeting the stringent requirements that Chairwoman Rosenworcel put in place to ensure the integrity of the program, which draws on funding in the high-cost universal service program.

“We need to connect everyone, everywhere, and today’s announcement will open new opportunities to serve communities that need high-speed, reliable broadband service,” **said Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel**. “We’re also working hard to make the best use of this funding to ensure that applicants meet their obligations and follow our rules. With proper oversight, this program can advance our goal of closing the digital divide.”

In January, Rosenworcel [established](#) the Rural Broadband Accountability Plan, a new effort to monitor and ensure compliance for universal service high-cost programs, including the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund and the Connect America Fund (CAF) Phase II Auction. The Plan established new transparency and audit and verification procedures that are publicly available so the public can track progress in these programs, such as the new deployment data in the CAF Phase II auction that is available here: <https://www.usac.org/highcost/funds/caf-phase-ii-auction/>.

The Commission today also announced a number of defaulted bids, making the census blocks in those defaulted bids potentially eligible for other funding programs. A list of the eligible census blocks previously covered by defaulted bids is available on the Auction 904 website under the “Results” tab, <https://www.fcc.gov/auction/904/round-results>.

Other steps to strengthen oversight of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund program include:

- 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 approximately 5,000 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 almost \$370 million.

- Conducting an exhaustive technical, financial, and legal review of all winning bidders.

A list of the eligible census blocks covered by the winning bids announced today will be made available on the Auction 904 website under the “Results” tab, <https://www.fcc.gov/auction/904/round-results>.

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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).*