



March 1, 2017

The Honorable Donald J Trump
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
S-230 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear President Trump, Majority Leader McConnell, and Speaker Ryan:

Broadband internet access is necessary infrastructure, and key to prosperity. It empowers entrepreneurship and economic growth, arms our teachers and students for success in the classroom, and gives our citizens a voice in the national dialog on our future.

That is why we, the undersigned representatives from 62 cities and counties across the nation, call on you to include broadband in any infrastructure legislation.

We are all part of Next Century Cities, a nationwide, non-partisan and non-profit membership organization of mayors and local government leaders who are committed to achieving better, faster, more affordable broadband internet access. As mayors and municipal officials, we have each championed access for our residents to high-quality broadband in ways that are right for our communities. We are eager to have the federal government take steps in an infrastructure package that will truly increase internet access for millions of Americans, and do so in ways that recognize the importance of local leaders in making these lofty plans a reality in our towns and cities across America.

Specifically, we call on you to ensure the following principles are included in any federal infrastructure plan:

- **Promote Broadband Access.** Seventeen percent of Americans (and some 53% of rural Americans) lack broadband access¹. There is an urgent need for increasing last-mile and middle-mile fiber networks to bring connectivity to all Americans. As such, Congress should consider preferencing proposals from communities that have taken steps to facilitate right of way access through policies such as One Touch Make Ready and Dig Once. Similarly, Congress should consider preferencing state applications for funding in states that have eliminated unreasonable barriers to local internet choice.
- **Promote Broadband Affordability.** The price of connectivity strains household budgets, putting internet access out of reach for too many Americans. Competition will drive down costs, so any infrastructure plan should include incentives for new market entrants and

¹ See *2015 Broadband Progress Report* at <https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research/reports/broadband-progress-reports/2015-broadband-progress-report>

overbuilders.

- **Promote Local Solutions for Broadband.** As we show, city governments have been leaders in designing their own networks, implementing public-private partnerships, and leading the way with new multi-provider, open-access delivery models. Any infrastructure plan should include funding for these arrangements. Solutions should include nonprofit models, especially including telephone and electric co-ops.

We believe the internet is nonpartisan and that collaboration benefits all. As such, we encourage you to learn from local voices like ours, and we look forward to working with members of both parties to ensure policies that promote greater access and increased deployment of next-generation broadband in any infrastructure legislation.

Sincerely,

Mayor Dana Kirkham
Ammon, ID

Mayor Norm Yoder
Auburn, IN

Mayor Steve Adler
Austin, TX

Mayor Ben Kessler
Bexley, OH

Mayor John Hamilton
Bloomington, IN

Mayor Mike Henry
City Manager Gary Williams
Carbondale, IL

Mayor Paul Cutler
Centerville, UT

Mayor Deborah Frank-Feinen
Champaign, IL

Mayor Jennifer Roberts
Charlotte, NC

Mayor Andy Berke
Chattanooga, TN

Town Manager Bernard Doyle
Chesterton, IN

Mayor Dorothy Knauss
Chewelah, WA

Mayor Kim McMillan
Clarksville, TN

Mayor Gary McCullough
Dahlonega, GA

Mayor John Woods
Davidson, NC

Mayor Lioneld Jordan
Fayetteville, AR

Mayor John J. Collins
Fountain Valley, CA

Mayor Don Boeder
Gaylord, MN

Mayor Robert Bruchey

Mayor Barbara Delgleize

Hagerstown, MD

Town Manager Janet Anderson
Islesboro, ME

City Councilman Steve Quinn
Jefferson, GA

Mayor Sly James
Kansas City, MO

Chair of the Select Board Peter d'Errico
Leverett, MA

Mayor Greg Fischer
Louisville, KY

Council Vice President Hans Riemer
Montgomery County, MD

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Morristown, TN

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Northampton, MA

Mayor Greg Scharff
Palo Alto, CA

Mayor Ted Wheeler
Portland, OR

Mayor Jim Barnes
Richmond, KY

Chief Executive Officer Jay Orr
Riverside County, CA

Town Manager Richard C. Bates
Select Board Chair William Chapman
Rockport, ME

Mayor Edwin Lee

Huntington Beach, CA

Mayor Jerry Gist
Jackson, TN

Mayor Mark Holland
Kansas City, KS

Mayor-President Joel Robideaux
Lafayette, LA

Mayor Jim Gray
Lexington, KY

Mayor John Giles
Mesa, AZ

Mayor Rex Swanson
Montrose, CO

Mayor Jill Boudreau
Mount Vernon, WA

Mayor Gary Fuller
Opelika, AL

Mayor James Carter
Pikeville, KY

Mayor Nancy McFarlane
Raleigh, NC

Mayor Rusty Bailey
Riverside, CA

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Roanoke, VA

Councilman Ron Nirenberg
San Antonio, TX

Mayor Pauline Cutter

San Francisco, CA

Mayor Bill King
City Council President Jeremy Pietzold
Sandy, OR

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Santa Cruz, CA

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Schenectady, NY

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Council Vice President Brian Housh
Yellow Springs, OH