

What others are saying about H.R. 1783 the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act

United States Congress

Congresswoman Cindy Axne (IA-03)

“The overlapping crises of the past year have been a stark case study on the need for affordable high-speed internet,” said Rep. Axne. “Whether it’s been remote learning, visiting a doctor through a telehealth appointment, keeping a business going through online orders, or navigating government services online – an internet connection has been as critical as electricity and safe shelter in these difficult times – and the inequities of access have made life impossible for those still operating without proper access. I’m proud to join my colleagues on the Rural Broadband Task Force to reintroduce a comprehensive solution to help provide affordable, high-speed broadband to all corners of our nation and to under-served communities in Iowa.”

Congresswoman Cheri Bustos (IL-17)

“In the district I serve, nearly four in 10 people don’t have access to high-speed broadband in their homes,” said Rep. Bustos. “High-speed internet access is critical to help our kids learn, our businesses grow, and our rural towns stay connected and competitive – we need real investment in rural broadband, right now. I’m proud to cosponsor the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act because it will invest in delivering the high-speed internet that our rural communities need.”

Congressman G. K. Butterfield (NC-01)

“As the country reaches the one-year mark of the COVID-19 pandemic, the desperate need for a high-speed internet connection to participate in the modern economy has become clearer than ever over the past year, especially in rural districts like mine,” said Rep. Butterfield. “I’m proud to join Whip Clyburn in reintroducing this legislation to promote the deployment of secure and reliable Internet connections for communities nationwide still lacking consistent service. This legislation will create educational and health resources, and spur much needed economic development for rural communities that have been left behind in today’s digital world.”

Congresswoman Angie Craig (MN-02)

“Broadband isn’t a luxury – it’s the infrastructure of the 21st century. Congress must prioritize closing the digital divide between our urban and rural communities – because broadband is vital to the success of every small business, school, hospital, and family in rural and underserved communities,” said Rep. Craig. “I’m proud to help introduce the Affordable, Accessible Internet for All Act and to support efforts to invest in rural broadband, which will expand economic opportunity for thousands of hardworking Minnesotans.”

Congressman Mike Doyle (PA-18)

“The last year has made it all too evident that universal broadband connectivity is critical to our economy, to the education of our youth, and to keeping our communities safe and connected during this unprecedented crisis,” said Rep. Doyle. “It’s been the glue that has been holding society together. Far too many low income and rural communities either can’t afford access or don’t have it. Our nation needs to get these kids and these communities connected. I’ve worked to address these inequities for years, and I’ve called for investing substantial federal resources to bridge the digital divide. I’m proud to join with my colleagues again in offering this comprehensive plan to expand broadband connectivity to unserved and underserved Americans, and I commend the leadership of my good friend and our Whip Jim Clyburn in offering up this proposal.”

Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo (CA-18)

“So many aspects of Americans’ lives have moved online due to the COVID-19 public health crisis, and the debilitating disparities and flaws in America’s broadband infrastructure have been exposed. It’s unacceptable that tens of millions of Americans still lack access to high-quality internet service at a time when online connection is so critical,” said Rep. Eshoo. “I thank Whip Clyburn for leading this strong legislative package to ensure every American has access to affordable broadband, and I thank him for including my legislation, the Nationwide Dig Once Act and the Community Broadband Act, in this critical package to modernize our country’s broadband infrastructure and bring more of our communities online.”

Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernandez (NM-03)

“During the pandemic, our rural and Native American schoolchildren couldn’t attend school virtually and instead had paper lessons delivered by school bus – no teacher interaction, just a bus drop,” said Rep. Leger Fernandez. “Without broadband, New Mexicans living in rural and Tribal communities have missed out on critical telehealth services and resources to keep their small businesses open. We needed this bill years ago and we introduce it now with the urgency of this moment because investing in broadband is an investment in our communities’ future. We’ve proudly brought my district’s experience to this bill which will benefit Tribal communities and spur collaborative projects to meet the needs of rural New Mexicans.”

Congressman Kaiali'i Kahele (HI-02)

"I look forward to working with Whip Clyburn and other members of the House Rural Broadband Task Force to help advance the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act, and see it become law. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted that connectivity is critical for education, economic development, health, and social services. We must have the broadband infrastructure in place, especially in our rural communities, to give all Americans the tools they need for better quality of life," said Rep. Kahele. "Due to Hawai'i's geography, we have unique challenges including the need to build a more robust and resilient inter-island fiber network. I'm very proud of our state and community leaders coming together -- on what's called the "Broadband Hui" -- to help advance the state's broadband initiatives."

Congressman Ro Khanna (CA-17)

"In the 21st century, free and reliable access to the internet isn't a luxury: it's a basic right. COVID-19 has only amplified the glaring technological disparities between the wealthy and the underserved," said Rep. Khanna. "Universal access is essential to ensuring every American can participate in the digital economy. Whip Clyburn's leadership on this bold legislation will move our country one step closer toward that reality. I'm proud to work with him on bridging the digital divide across our country."

Congressman Ron Kind (WI-03)

"As a member of the National Rural Broadband Task Force, expanding access to broadband is one of my highest priorities. The internet is a necessity and has fundamentally changed the way we learn, communicate, access information, and conduct business, particularly throughout the COVID-19 crisis," said Rep. Ron Kind. "Unfortunately, far too many communities throughout Wisconsin have limited access to high-speed internet. That's why I am proud to join my colleagues in introducing the Accessible, Affordable, Internet for All Act to help close the rural-digital divide and ensure no Wisconsinite gets left behind."

Congresswoman Ann Kuster (NH-02)

"The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for all Americans to have a reliable, high-speed internet connection as many students are learning in virtual classrooms, employees are working from home, and telehealth appointments have replaced many in-person doctor's visits," said Rep. Kuster. "Having a reliable internet connection has never been more important, and I'm proud to join House Majority Whip James Clyburn and the Rural Broadband Task Force to introduce this badly-needed legislation to invest in high-speed broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved communities. The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act will help to ensure that Americans in the Granite State and across the country – especially those in rural areas – have access to an affordable, reliable internet connection."

Congressman Tom Malinowski (NJ-7)

“There are places in my district in New Jersey where kids have to go to a youth center or a library parking lot after hours to do their homework because they don’t have access to broadband at home,” said Rep. Malinowski. “As a member of the House Rural Broadband Task Force, I am proud to be putting forward this sweeping legislation that will give all Americans access to affordable high-speed internet.”

Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-09)

“This past year has stressed the importance of internet accessibility and affordability, underscoring that this is a human rights issue,” said Rep. McNerney. “Americans who cannot obtain internet lose out on economic and educational opportunities. Their health is put at risk, as many medical services have shifted to telehealth, and their ability to stay connected to friends and loved ones is greatly reduced or eliminated – which in itself can harm their mental health and quality of life. This legislation will help close the gaps in broadband deployment, adoption, and digital literacy. I thank Whip Clyburn, Chairman Pallone, and all of my colleagues who worked to put together this bill. I’m proud that this legislation includes the Digital Equity Act, legislation that I authored with my colleagues Representatives Yvette Clarke and Ritchie Torres, and would create two critical federal grant programs to help close gaps in broadband adoption and promote digital skills and literacy. I am also proud that the Broadband Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act is included, that I authored with Representative Cindy Axne and would spur broadband deployment through public-private partnerships.”

Congresswoman Grace Meng (NY-06)

“COVID-19 exposed deep gaps in our society especially between those who have internet access and those who have no or poor access,” said Rep. Meng. “I am honored to join House Majority Whip Clyburn and reintroduce the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act that will address these issues and ensure all can thrive in an internet driven future. I am also thankful to the Whip for including \$2 billion to fund E-Rate that is based on the Emergency Educational Connections Act that Senator Markey and I championed together in the American Rescue Plan. I am grateful to work with Whip Clyburn to close the homework gap for all, and the \$2 billion takes us even closer toward that goal.”

Congressman Joseph Morelle (NY-25)

“The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored just how important fair, reliable, and affordable internet is to working families everywhere,” said Rep. Morelle. “Unfortunately, too many Americans face barriers to accessing this critical infrastructure, particularly in rural and low-income communities - and that’s unacceptable. I’m proud to support this legislation to ensure broadband is accessible to everyone, regardless of where they live.”

Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester (DE-AL)

“As our country has continued to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become clear that reliable access to the internet is as essential as access to electricity. From work, to school, to our social lives –broadband, while necessary, isn’t reliably available to all Americans,” said Rep. Blunt Rochester. “The Internet for All Act, led by Rep. Clyburn, recognizes the fundamental urgency of our challenge and makes meaningful and impactful investments that will expand broadband access and provide Americans of every geography and background with the resources they need for the times in which we live.”

Congresswoman Terri Sewell (AL-07)

“The coronavirus pandemic has laid bare the historic disinvestment of high speed, affordable internet in underserved communities across our country, particularly in Alabama’s rural Black Belt,” said Rep. Sewell. “As a member of the Rural Broadband Task Force, I remain committed to ensuring every American has access to this basic utility for critical services like telehealth beyond our current public health and economic crisis, and The Affordable, Accessible, Affordable Internet for All will do just that.”

Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger (VA-07)

“The COVID-19 crisis has further underscored the fact that access to reliable high-speed internet is an issue of opportunity. A lack of broadband connectivity hurts the ability of students to complete their homework, farmers to take advantage of the latest ag technologies, and businesses to recruit and hire new employees,” said Rep. Spanberger. “This legislation meets the moment and includes a historic investment in expanded broadband internet access — something I’ve called for throughout my time in Congress. I’m proud to serve as a Member of the Rural Broadband Task Force, and I’d like to thank Rep. Clyburn for his continued leadership on this issue as we work together to close the digital divide in Central Virginia and across the country.”

Congressman Ritchie Torres (NY-15)

“We all knew that inequities exist in access to broadband, but COVID-19 exacerbated the digital divide in rural and urban communities across the country as millions of children have been unable to access remote learning and fallen behind on educational attainment,” said Rep. Torres. “I’m proud to support the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act, which will finally close the digital divide, provide assistance to build out broadband networks in underserved communities, and support our students. We must make the investments necessary to ensure that communities devastated by the pandemic are able to recover and succeed in a digital, interconnected society.”

Congressman David Trone (MD-06)

“We’ve seen how millions of folks have been left behind because of a lack of high-speed broadband during this pandemic when it comes to telework, telehealth, and teleducation,” said Rep. Trone. “The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act will bring us one step closer to bridging the digital divide and ensuring that every American, no matter where they live or how much money they make, can access broadband.”

Congresswoman Lauren Underwood (IL-14)

“Access to a reliable internet connection has never been more important. Without it, students struggle to keep up with online learning, families cannot stay connected, and small businesses cannot connect with customers which hurts our economy. The bottom line is: we can and must do better and improve internet connectivity across the country, especially for our rural neighbors,” said Rep. Underwood. “The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act will help keep our communities connected and close the digital gap; I am proud to have worked with Whip Clyburn and the rest of the Rural Broadband Task Force to develop this legislation and look forward to working to pass it into law.”

Congressman Marc Veasey (TX-33)

“This pandemic has exposed many blind spots in our current infrastructure system, one of which is access to broadband,” said Rep. Veasey. “We are living in the 21st Century digital age and in order to succeed you need to be connected. I’m proud to be an original cosponsor of the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act that comprehensively looks at our broadband infrastructure and creates real opportunities for everyone across this nation, from rural to urban and everywhere in-between, to have access to fast, reliable internet. I’m particularly happy to see my legislation that authorizes more funds for the EBB program and ensures more coordination between agencies included in this major package.”

Congressman Peter Welch (VT-AL)

“The digital divide is real and has only widened since the start of the COVID pandemic. We need to act now to close this divide and connect all Americans with high-speed, affordable broadband,” said Rep. Welch. “Our students, health care providers, business owners, and farmers need high-speed internet to survive in the modern economy. The Rural Broadband Task Force, led by Whip Clyburn, has produced a comprehensive and bold broadband plan to provide every American with affordable, high-speed internet. I am looking forward to working with my colleagues to get this across the finish line.”

Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)

“Despite the fact that access to the internet is a necessity for everything from education to access to health care, the digital divide continues to be a barrier to opportunity for entire communities,” said Sen. Booker. “This legislation will make a much needed investment in broadband infrastructure to help ensure that all communities have reliable and affordable access to the internet.”

Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)

“This bill would ensure that more Americans are connected to affordable, high-speed internet — a must in the 21st century. Especially during the pandemic, the importance of dependable, fast internet access cannot be overstated for students to do schoolwork, for families to connect with loved ones, and for businesses to communicate with customers. Reliable broadband is also indispensable for Americans to access vaccines and health care, critical to winning the fight against this pandemic. I am proud to join in this effort with my colleagues and expand access to broadband for all,” said Sen. Blumenthal.

Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)

“We’ve seen during this pandemic how critical broadband access is to families, small businesses, and health care providers in Nevada and all over the country,” said Sen. Cortez Masto. “Whether you’re attending school, calling in to a work teleconference, or consulting a doctor during a telehealth session, you need quality internet access you can rely on. This bill would strengthen internet access and expand digital literacy in both rural areas and cities.”

Senator Richard J. Durbin (D-IL)

“I am proud to join Sen. Klobuchar and House Majority Whip Clyburn in introducing the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act,” said Sen. Durbin. “The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how drastic the digital divide is in America. This bill makes the kind of investment necessary to our broadband infrastructure that will help us expand economic opportunity, bring service to underserved areas, and maintain our competitive-edge on the world stage.”

Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-MN)

“The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear: Broadband is essential. In rural and Tribal communities, digital equity is urgently needed to address longstanding disparities that impact the way Americans learn, work, and do business,” said Sen. Luján. “I was proud to work on and pass this bill with Whip Clyburn in the House last Congress, and I’m proud to join Senator Klobuchar in reintroducing the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act to bridge the digital divide, invest in broadband, and help connect Americans. As Chair of the Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Media, and Broadband, I look forward to working with my colleagues to find innovative solutions to finally close the digital divide.”

Senator Edward Markey (D-MA)

“The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted, more than ever, how essential broadband is to the future of American life, education, jobs, and medical care,” said Sen. Markey. “Yet, for millions of Americans – disproportionately from communities of color, low-income households, and rural areas –reliable and affordable connectivity is not available. To bridge this digital divide, we need to provide billions of dollars in new funding for broadband infrastructure and affordability assistance, with equitable investments targeted toward our most vulnerable populations. The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act will achieve these goals, and I am proud to join my colleagues in introducing this critical legislation.

Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV)

*“The COVID-19 crisis has made clear the realities of the digital divide affecting far too many families in Nevada and across the nation,” said **Sen. Rosen**. “We must address this technological disparity to ensure Nevadans in every community are able to work and learn from home, search for employment, access public benefits, and obtain telehealth services to protect their health. I will continue working to improve our nation’s broadband in order to improve the lives of Americans.”*

Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI)

*“Broadband has been a critical lifeline during the pandemic, making it possible to work and learn remotely, see a doctor without leaving home, and stay connected with relatives. But right now, too many families from underserved communities face barriers to getting online and are falling behind,” said **Sen. Schatz**. “Our bill will help close the digital divide and make sure everyone has fast, affordable internet access.”*

Senator Mark Warner (D-VA)

*“The continuing health crisis has only underscored what we already know: that too many households across the country lack reliable access to broadband. In Virginia alone, it’s estimated that more than 700,000 Virginians lack access to broadband, making it harder for families to access essential services during these unprecedented times. Access to broadband helps communities meaningfully participate in the digital economy. Individuals can apply for a job or submit a college application, families can connect with their health care providers without having to travel long distances, and teachers and students can advance and supplement their online learning,” said **Sen. Warner**. “Accessibility to broadband is vital to increasing digital literacy, achieving economic stability, and advancing education, and this critical legislation will help bridge the gap for communities that still need access to this critical technology.”*

Senator Reverend Raphael Warnock (D-GA)

*“This pandemic has accentuated long-standing inequities among hardworking Georgian, and American, families,” said **Sen. Warnock**. “From students to farmers to small business owners, expanding accessible, affordable internet and strengthening rural broadband will improve local economies, help students excel in a rapidly changing online learning landscape and allow farmers to adapt to agriculture innovations emerging from our state. The tremendous difference rural broadband will make cannot be overstated—and this legislation is an important step in the right direction.”*

Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)

*“Our current public health and economic crisis has made it all the more urgent that we get affordable, high-speed broadband to every home and business in our country. Congress needs to pass the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act to ensure every family can access school, work, and health care through the internet,” said **Sen. Warren**.*

Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR)

*"In my town halls across Oregon, I've seen first-hand how reliable broadband can lift up rural towns. And I've seen how rural and lower-income communities without first-class infrastructure are being left behind. Senator Klobuchar and Congressman Clyburn's legislation is a strong package that would ensure all Americans can depend on broadband for critical access to work, education, healthcare and everything else. I'm also pleased they included an additional \$6 billion for the Emergency Broadband Benefit I helped craft, to keep working Americans online," said **Sen. Wyden**.*

Federal Communications Commission

Acting FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel

*"This pandemic has made clear that broadband is no longer nice-to-have, it's need-to-have for everyone, everywhere," said **Jessica Rosenworcel, Acting FCC Chairwoman**. "Kudos to the Rural Broadband Task Force for recognizing this fundamental truth and developing a plan to connect us all. Working together we can solve the digital divide and give everyone a fair shot at internet age success."*

FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks

*"Late last year, Congress invested in broadband connectivity to help fight the pandemic through the Emergency Broadband Benefit," said **Geoffrey Starks, FCC Commissioner**. "This legislation takes the vital next steps—following through on digital equity, making big investments in broadband infrastructure, and focusing our resources in the most efficient manner. I'm thankful for the continued leadership of Majority Whip Clyburn and Senator Klobuchar in ensuring that all Americans have broadband to connect them to work, school, medicine, and loved ones."*

Supporters

Access Now

*"It's clear the digital divide will not fix itself," said **Eric Null, U.S. Policy Manager**. "The COVID pandemic has forced many online, but the digital divide has left behind the nation's low-income communities and communities of color. The Affordable, Accessible Internet for All Act tackles this issue head-on by narrowing the chasm between the broadband haves and have-nots. Not only does the legislation fund digital inclusion programs and infrastructure, it overrides states that have made community broadband solutions difficult or impossible, and requires broadband providers to be transparent about their pricing data. Passing this bill will substantially close the digital divide, helping to bring the nation's most at-risk communities online."*

American Civil Liberties Union

*"Broadband access is essential to the health of our nation and to the success of all people living and working in this country," said **Kate Ruane, Senior Legislative Counsel**. "We look forward to working with Whip Clyburn and all Members of Congress to increase broadband access and affordability for all."*

American Library Association

*“The nation’s libraries – 117,000 strong – have long been an essential strand in our country’s digital safety net, said **Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., President** “Every day libraries see the repercussions of a persistent digital divide and provide millions of Americans not only access to the internet, but also help develop the skills to navigate increasingly sophisticated online services and resources. The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act tackles all sides of the digital divide: access, affordability, and adoption, and digital skills. The American Library Association looks forward to working with Rep. Clyburn and the Rural Broadband Task Force to move forward the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act.”*

Common Cause

*“We commend Whip Clyburn and his colleagues in the House for introducing this landmark legislation to ensure everyone is connected to affordable, high-speed, quality broadband,” said **Yosef Getachew, Media and Democracy Program Director**. “The Accessible, Affordable, Internet for All Act takes significant steps to address all aspects of the digital divide including broadband access, affordability, and digital equity. For far too long, millions of households have been unable to participate in our democracy and economy because they lacked connectivity. Now is the time to pass this legislation to take significant steps in closing the digital divide.”*

Common Sense Media

*“We cannot wait any longer to ensure that every home and business in America has a robust broadband connection, to grow our economy, protect our health, and ensure that all kids have equal access to a good education,” said **James P. Steyer, CEO and Founder**. This critical legislation takes us in that direction and Congress should move quickly to pass it along with other key infrastructure investments.”*

Communications Workers of America (CWA)

*“CWA members, especially the technicians who build these networks, have seen firsthand how our nation's inadequate investment in broadband has exacerbated inequality during the pandemic,” said **Chris Shelton, President**. “With a new President and Congress in power, we now have an incredible chance to build back better and transform our nation by ensuring affordable, high-speed broadband access for all, regardless of race, income or geography. Rep. Clyburn's broadband infrastructure bill introduced today includes strong provisions to expand broadband access to rural communities and protect good union jobs across the country.”*

Consumer Report

"Consumer Reports is proud to support the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act authored and introduced by Representative Clyburn," said Jonathan Schwantes, Senior Policy Counsel. "This bill represents a long overdue down payment for what it will take to get more Americans, especially our most vulnerable, connected to high-speed internet. Of the many things we have quickly learned as millions of Americans have shifted to working, learning, and receiving medical care at home during the pandemic is the absolute necessity of a reliable and affordable internet connection with clear and transparent pricing. This act contains several provisions that address the affordability and price transparency challenges, while also encouraging community broadband alternatives by doing away with anti-competitive, anti-consumer state laws that prohibit local broadband networks that could offer its residents better service at lower prices."

Edison Electric Institute

"EEI and our member companies commend House Majority Whip Clyburn for his continued leadership and his work to expand affordable and reliable broadband access to all American communities," said Tom Kuhn, President. "The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the digital divide that still exists in many communities across the country, and EEI and our member companies are committed to helping bridge this gap. Electric companies long have incorporated telecommunications equipment and fiber technology into their operations—particularly in rural areas—to support communications and to provide real-time monitoring and controls for generation and transmission operations. Creating new opportunities for electric companies to leverage these fiber investments to provide middle-mile broadband infrastructure, in partnership with telecommunications companies and last-mile internet providers, is a win for all stakeholders, particularly customers and communities in underserved and unserved areas."

Electronic Frontier Foundation

"America is in desperate need of a national 21st century infrastructure program for universal broadband access," said Ernesto Falcon, Senior Legislative Counsel. "The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act is that plan, and it will deliver future-proof fiber-optic connections into communities across the country where none exists or will ever exist without this bill. If Congress wants to end the digital divide, this is the bill to do it."

Fiber Broadband Association

"The Fiber Broadband Association enthusiastically endorses the Accessible, Affordable Internet Act of 2021 as this legislation promises to change the landscape of US Internet usage, providing millions of unserved and underserved Americans with access to the world's highest performing broadband networks," said Gary Bolton, President & CEO. "The global pandemic has highlighted the critical necessity of all-fiber networks and the role they play in closing the widening urban and rural digital divide gap for all Americans."

Free Press Action

*“Representative Clyburn's comprehensive broadband package passed the House last year in much the same form, and would have become law then if the Senate majority in the last Congress were serious about affordable and universal internet access,” said **Matt Wood, Vice President of Policy**. “But the bill is just as timely as ever now, building on the passage of the Emergency Broadband Benefit in December and additional funding for student connections just this week. The majority of people disconnected today are offline because they can’t afford it, and this affordability gap disproportionately impacts people of color, poorer communities, elderly populations, and other groups at the intersections of systemic discrimination. Beyond its welcome and innovative ideas for funding new networks, this bill addresses the fact that infrastructure does little good when people don't have choices about what to buy, information about what it truly costs them, and the ability to pay that price.”*

Friends Committee on National Legislation

*“It is difficult to understate the power of broadband internet access in 2021,” said **Diane Randall, General Secretary**. “The yawning gap between those communities with broadband access and those without is particularly acute in poor and rural communities. In particular, the need for broadband internet is especially acute in Native American communities and Indian country. But this is a solvable problem. Legislation like the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act can begin the long overdue process of making broadband access a reality nationwide.”*

Gigi Sohn, Georgetown Law Institute for Technology & Policy

*The “Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act” is an essential piece of legislation that addresses broadband affordability, availability and adoption, recognizing that the digital divide is both an urban and a rural problem,” said **Gigi Sohn, Distinguished Fellow**. “Importantly, it would promote competition in the broadband market by preferencing open access networks and repealing anticompetitive state laws that prohibit communities from building their own broadband networks. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the need for every household in the U.S. to have robust, high speed broadband Internet access at home. The Emergency Broadband Benefit included in December’s COVID-19 relief bill was a great start. The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act is the next important step in getting the job done. The American people owe a debt of gratitude to the House Rural Broadband Task Force Staff, House Majority Whip Clyburn’s staff, and the House Energy and Commerce Committee staff. They took a bill that was excellent when passed last July and made it even better. The result is a bill that will make great progress towards bringing Internet access to the tens of millions in the U.S. who don’t currently have it. Congress should pass this bill without delay.”*

INCOMPAS

*“Internet for All is more than a goal, it’s a moral imperative,” said **Chip Pickering, CEO.** “Together our nation can and must, extend the power of faster, more affordable internet access to every American family. The Clyburn legislation will create jobs today and make a bold investment in a better future filled with more competition, innovation and opportunity for all.”*

“INCOMPAS supports additional federal investment in our broadband future. INCOMPAS members bring more broadband competition and build new networks that deliver gigabit speed service and beyond at lower prices. Together we will fight to ensure all Americans can have access to the internet of the future and the opportunities for innovation it creates.”

Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States

*“As the pandemic has made clear, accessibility to reliable, high-speed internet is essential to many aspects of contemporary life - education, work, civic engagement, and health care, just to name a few,” said **Rev. Ted Penton, SJ, Secretary of Justice and Ecology.** “As people of faith, we believe that full participation in our public life must be made available to all, especially those living in underserved communities.”*

National Consumer Law Center

*““African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians and Alaska Natives have lower broadband subscription rates than their white counterparts, and the main barrier to broadband service is cost,” said **Olivia Wein, staff attorney at the National Consumer Law Center.** “On behalf of our low-income clients, we commend the leadership of Majority Whip Clyburn in introducing this critically important bill.”*

National Council of Churches USA

*“The availability of access to the internet has been a primary concern in terms of the negative impacts it has had in minority communities and rural areas,” said **Rev. Dr. Leslie Copeland Tune, Chief Operating Officer.** “The novel coronavirus global pandemic has magnified the disparities that exist and the negative outcomes that not having broadband access has on the most vulnerable. This legislation is a positive step toward equity and ending the disparities in broadband access that has hindered progress for too many in our country.”*

National Digital Inclusion Alliance

*“The COVID-19 crisis has made everyone aware that tens of millions of our neighbors still lack basic internet connections, and they live in communities of all kinds – big cities, small towns, suburban as well as rural and tribal communities,” said **Angela Siefer, Executive Director**. “The AAIA Bill is an historic effort to address multiple causes of our persistent digital divide. It not only includes a substantial investment to extend high speed internet access, but also addresses the United States’ inequitable access and use of the internet by authorizing additional funding for the Emergency Broadband Benefit to make access affordable to everyone, supporting state level digital equity planning, helping states and communities fund digital inclusion initiatives, and requiring the FCC and internet service providers to make the price of home broadband service transparent and public. These are all vital steps toward digital equity for all Americans.”*

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

*“Efforts to bridge the digital divide began nearly 25 years ago, yet millions of rural Americans remain sidelined and disconnected simply because of their zip code,” said **Jim Matheson, CEO**. “In 2021, that’s unacceptable – especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spotlight the need for high-performing broadband access in so many aspects of rural communities. Hundreds of electric cooperatives are conducting feasibility studies on building broadband for their communities, on top of the more than 150 electric co-ops already working to provide broadband access in their local communities. This legislation carries the promise of accelerating those efforts and expanding broadband access across rural America. We commend the cosponsors of the bill for their focus on solving this problem and look forward to working with them and other stakeholders to make broadband access possible throughout the nation.”*

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

*“NETWORK is thrilled to support the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act and urges its immediate passage,” said **Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director**. “During NETWORK’s 2019 Rural Roundtables we learned firsthand how people are being left behind because of their lack of access to the internet. I will never forget our visit to rural Mississippi where poor internet connectivity shut down all credit card readers in local stores. Mississippi students use 20-year-old textbooks with no access to online resources. These students were literally missing pages of history. COVID has highlighted the need to mend the digital divide once and for all. In the 21st century, access to broadband means access to health care, education, banking, and so much more. Those left behind are cut off from unparalleled opportunities, and the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act will end these digital disparities.”*

NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association

“Broadband access has never been more important, and NTCA members continue to lead the charge in delivering high-quality broadband services that make rural communities vibrant places to live, do business, and go to school,” said Shirley Bloomfield, CEO. “That said, the job of connecting rural America with broadband and maintaining those connections is not done. On behalf of NTCA’s members, I therefore thank Congressman Clyburn for his leadership in highlighting the importance of connecting all Americans. We particularly appreciate this bill’s acknowledgment of the need for more robust networks that will meet the demands of consumers today and tomorrow, and the measures to ensure recipients of funds will in fact be capable of delivering services as promised before funds are awarded. We look forward to continuing to work with policymakers on tackling broadband availability and adoption challenges in the weeks, months and years ahead.”

Open Technology Institute

“For too long, the federal government has let America’s digital divide and infrastructure languish,” said Joshua Stager, Deputy Director. “The Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act makes clear that those days are over. This legislation is the best broadband infrastructure bill we’ve seen, as it addresses the full scope of the problem: access, affordability, and digital literacy. This legislation offers structural reforms that will hold internet providers accountable and help millions of people stay connected during the pandemic and beyond. Congress should pass it as soon as possible.”

Plastics Pipe Institute

“PPI strongly supports the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act, which would authorize badly-needed funding to deploy broadband to all parts of the country,” said David Fink, President. “PPI members manufacture and distribute the polyethylene conduit needed in fiber optic systems, providing superior broadband service. We applaud Majority Whip Clyburn for his steadfast leadership on this issue and we look forward to seeing this bill enacted this year.”

Power and Communication Contractors Association

“PCCA appreciates Congressman Clyburn’s continued leadership in the broadband deployment arena and the introduction of the AAIA, which will authorize needed federal dollars to meet skyrocketing demand for the construction of broadband infrastructure across the country,” said John Fluharty, Board Chairman. “PCCA supports this important bill, and we look forward to working with the Majority Whip to ensure that management and allocation of federal resources are based on successful completion of set milestones provided in the legislation.”

Presbyterian Church (USA) Offices of Public Witness and the United Nations

*“The passage of H.R. 7302, the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act, is of extreme importance,” said **Rev. Jimmie Hawking, Director**. “We live in a digital age when almost every aspect of life is impacted by having access to the internet. Children who lack Wi-Fi in their homes are hampered in their ability to excel and even complete their classroom assignments. The ability to compete in business is hampered for anyone seeking to perform the basic operations of communication with clients and employees. This lack of internet service impacts those who are impoverished most of all. The components of this bill provide equity for those threatened with being left behind. The \$80 billion financing, a new office of National Telecommunications and Information Administration and the reduction of consumer costs, will be greatly beneficial and provide mandatory services to many struggling Americans. The Presbyterian Church (USA) strongly endorses the passage of H.R. 7302 as necessary legislation to enhance the lives of people eager to utilize digital technology to improve the quality of their lives and that of their children.”*

Public Knowledge

*“This legislation is a significant investment that would help the approximately 42 million Americans on the wrong side of the digital divide by taking a more comprehensive approach to getting and keeping people connected to affordable, reliable high-speed broadband,” said **Jenna Leventoff, Senior Policy Counsel**. “It would fund both broadband deployment and affordability, as well as improving reliability by requiring the FCC to collect data on the resiliency of our nation’s communications networks. We urge Congress to pass this legislation as an important next step towards closing the digital divide, and look forward to working with Rep. Clyburn, Sen. Klobuchar, and others as they continue their work to close the digital divide for good.”*

The Revolutionary Love Project

*“It is time to close the digital divide,” said **Valarie Kaur, Founder**. “We can only build a nation where every person can flourish if we ensure that all people -- across race and place -- have access to the open Internet. I urge Congress to pass the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act -- not only as a strategic necessity but as a moral imperative.”*

Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition

*“For the last year the conversation around closing the digital divide has centered on short-term, urgent solutions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **John Windhausen Jr., Executive Director**. “While these efforts are critical, we also need long-term solutions to address the enormous inequities in our broadband landscape so we are better prepared for the next crisis. The SHLB Coalition applauds Whip Clyburn for re-introducing the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act, a well-rounded proposal that looks to close our nation's connectivity gap with a path for all community anchor institutions in the country to have gigabit capacity, a goal established in the National Broadband Plan that we must not let slip. The bill would also attend to the important need for digital literacy training to promote broadband adoption. We encourage Congress to keep its eye on the prize - closing the digital divide - by moving quickly to enact the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act as soon as possible.”*

The Student Internet Equity Coalition

*“Too many of our most vulnerable citizens—tragically this includes our nation’s secondary students—lack the most basic of modern tools—access to the internet and a computer in their homes,” said **Donna Rattley Washington, Founder**. “The Student Internet Equity Coalition advocates for equitable digital access for America’s secondary students. Congressman Clyburn’s bill, *Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act*, is groundbreaking legislation that creates and funds a set of robust policy responses to attack and eradicate digital, educational and economic inequality, especially for people of color and other marginalized communities.”*

WTA - Advocates for Rural Broadband

*“We applaud the efforts of Majority Whip Clyburn and the House Broadband Taskforce to get broadband to unserved households,” said **Derrick Owens, Senior Vice President of Government & Industry Affairs**. “What’s been confirmed over the past year is that broadband connectivity is absolutely vital for participation in today’s world. We look forward to working on this pressing issue with Majority Whip Clyburn and his colleagues in the House and Senate as this legislation moves forward.”*