

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 12, 2023

Hon. Alan B. Davidson  
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Davidson:

We write to express our concern with the length of the challenge period for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) draft National Broadband Map (“Map”) and the impact it will have on the National Telecommunications and Information Administration’s (NTIA) Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program.

Upon review of the timeline set forth by the NTIA, we do not believe that sufficient time has been provided to receive appropriate public input and participation in the challenge process. As you know, the amount of BEAD funding that each state receives is dependent on the accuracy of the Map, underscoring the importance of this process.

On November 18, 2022, the FCC released a draft of the Map. This release began an eight-week period, set to end on January 13, 2023, which the NTIA has stated is the “best opportunity” for eligible entities to submit challenges to the Map and guarantee that the FCC will be able to include such feedback and input in the final Map used to allocate BEAD funding. We believe it is critical that the NTIA provides adequate time and encouragement for the public to review the draft Map and submit challenges to ensure an accurate final product.

Unfortunately, the eight-week challenge period has caused serious problems for our constituents and stakeholders. We have heard from constituents and stakeholders that this comment period, which included the 2022 holiday season, is insufficient to thoroughly review the Map, collect data, and prepare challenges. Providing enough time for the challenge process is especially important given that we already know that many rural communities are missing from the Map, many of which lack the resources or ability to file expedient challenges without additional technical assistance or guidance.

Our concern about the brief period allowed for review, comment, and challenge to the Map has also been raised by several states, which have already asked the NTIA to extend the challenge period.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the NTIA extend the eight-week challenge period beyond January 13, 2023, to ensure that interested constituents and stakeholders have time to submit challenges. Without an extension, we are deeply concerned that the final Map will be inaccurate, perpetuate existing coverage gaps, and result in a disproportionate distribution of necessary resources away from those communities that need the most assistance. Simply stated, a poorly developed final Map will undermine the success and potential of the BEAD program.

To better understand the development of the Map and decisions behind the current challenge process, we respectfully request your attention and timely responses to the following questions:

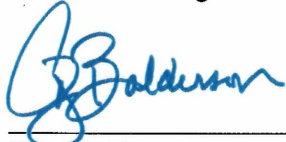
- Is the NTIA concerned that the eight-week challenge period for the Map will result in inaccurate allocation of BEAD funding and, potentially, exclude rural areas with limited coverage that are most in need of broadband infrastructure?
- How is the NTIA engaging with state governments and stakeholders to ensure they have the resources necessary to reach all constituencies to submit accurate challenges?
- Has the NTIA seen success in working with the FCC to assist with their outreach efforts so eligible entities can file a challenge? If so, can you provide examples?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you as we move through this process.

Sincerely,



John Joyce, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Troy Balderson  
Member of Congress



Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress



Robert B. Aderholt  
Member of Congress



Dan Meuser  
Member of Congress



Guy Reschenthaler  
Member of Congress



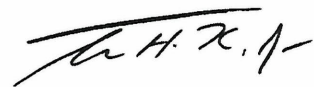
Glenn "GT" Thompson  
Member of Congress



Hal Rogers  
Member of Congress



Eric A. "Rick" Crawford  
Member of Congress



Thomas H. Kean, Jr.  
Member of Congress



---

Burgess Owens  
Member of Congress



---

Julia Letlow  
Member of Congress



---

Mike Flood  
Member of Congress



---

Bruce Westerman  
Member of Congress



---

Greg Pence  
Member of Congress



---

Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress



---

Barry Moore  
Member of Congress



---

Beth Van Duyne  
Member of Congress



---

Michael Guest  
Member of Congress



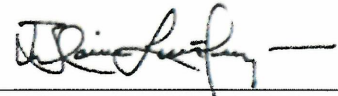
---

Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



---

Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress



---

Blaine Luetkemeyer  
Member of Congress



---

John R. Moolenaar  
Member of Congress



---

Brad Finstad  
Member of Congress



---

Marcus Molinaro  
Member of Congress



---

Jake Ellzey  
Member of Congress

Enclosures

cc: Hon. Jessica Rosenworcel, Federal Communications Commission