



Discover all that we do at ncta.com

August 7, 2026

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman, Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Lee
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 2051

Dear Chairs Capito and Lee:

Thank you for your leadership and longstanding focus in advancing efforts to ensure that federal policies support timely, cost-effective infrastructure deployment. As the Senate considers improvements to the permitting process for America's essential industries, we encourage you to include reforms that benefit consumers by accelerating the deployment of broadband infrastructure.

America stands on the cusp of deploying \$21 billion in Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding to connect every household and small business, alongside [more than \\$11 billion in matching investments](#) from internet service providers. For those investments to succeed, as well as the billions spent without government support, Congress must help remove barriers that delay projects and increase costs. American taxpayers deserve to see these investments deliver results, and consumers in unserved areas deserve timely access to affordable broadband services.

To expand broadband access across the country, providers must obtain permits and other authorizations to access utility poles, public rights-of-way, and easements from state and local governments, as well as numerous federal agencies. Increasingly, delays in obtaining access to these critical inputs are impeding efforts to close the digital divide.

As the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General recently [found](#), delays involving permitting, pole attachments, and easement and right-of-way access “affect timely execution and increase deployment costs [of broadband projects], which could impact broadband officials’ and industry stakeholders’ ability to successfully deploy broadband.”

In addition, transportation and other federally funded development projects frequently involve government-directed relocation of existing broadband facilities to accommodate a project's construction and maintenance activity. Too often, even though they do not cause or directly benefit from the project, broadband providers typically bear the expense of such costly forced relocations. As a result, resources are diverted away from a provider's efforts to extend its plant to provide high-speed broadband to unserved and underserved areas. The costs of these federally funded projects should not be shifted onto broadband providers.

Without federal legislation to address these barriers, subsidized projects risk significant delays, driving up costs and undermining the effectiveness of federal broadband investments. As a result, billions of dollars intended to serve unserved and underserved communities could be wasted, leaving many Americans without access to broadband service – waiting longer for the connectivity they need to work, learn, access health care, and participate fully in our modern economy.

Any permitting reforms should include at least the federal agencies with which our member companies most frequently interact to complete deployment projects, including the Department of Agriculture; U.S. Forest Service; Department of the Interior, including the Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and Bureau of Indian Affairs; Department of Defense installations; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and the Department of Transportation. Reforms should also equip relevant federal agencies with clear authorities, resources, and coordination tools needed to align federal policies, taxpayer resources, and private-sector funding toward a shared goal of accelerating broadband deployment. These improvements will help turn these investments into completed projects and reliable connectivity, unlocking economic opportunities for communities nationwide.

NCTA's member companies are committed to finishing the job of bringing the digital economy to every community. Our nation's competitiveness and the promise of historic broadband investments depend on permitting reform to connect all Americans. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues on this critical effort to ensure that every American has access to reliable, high-speed internet.

Sincerely,



[Cory Gardner \(Aug 7, 2026 12:00:44 MDT\)](#)

The Hon. Cory Gardner
President & CEO
NCTA – The Internet & Television Association

Cc:

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
254 Russell Senate Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
254 Russell Senate Building
Washington DC, 20510