

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 24, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

The spread of the coronavirus within our nation's communities has strained our healthcare systems beyond capacity, shuttered local businesses, and closed schools nationwide, turning the lives of everyday Americans upside down. It has also forced a historic reliance on the internet – and yet, as of 2019, more than one in four rural residents still lack broadband access. In the midst of this crisis, millions of Americans find themselves without the ability to access a wide range of important services including e-learning for children being schooled at home, video conferencing to work from home and stay in touch with our loved ones, and telehealth services that help flatten the curve by keeping those feeling ill at home.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a bright spotlight on the disparities that exist across the country between those who have broadband and those who do not. These disparities have real public health and economic impacts – and not just during a public health crisis. In addition to looking for short-term solutions that can immediately mitigate some of these disparities and provide relief during this crisis, we also need to address the issue of broadband connectivity over the long-term.

Once the pandemic has abated and the economic recovery begins, we cannot leave these Americans to continue to face the same e-connectivity problems as they look to rebuild. From the reports of record-high unemployment claims to projections of negative GDP growth through the end of the year, it is becoming increasingly clear that following the end of this public health crisis, Congress will need to take action to help stimulate the economy, including by making much-needed investments in our nation's rural areas.

As Congress considers such a stimulus package, we urge you to include the funding necessary to ensure that Americans have access to broadband from coast to coast. The economic mobility and access to the modern economy of Americans should not be determined by their zip code. By

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making a historic investment in our nation's e-connectivity, Congress would not only stimulate the economy through new construction and associated jobs but would unleash economic and entrepreneurial opportunities across all of America by giving those in the most remote areas access to the same tools for e-commerce as those in the largest cities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

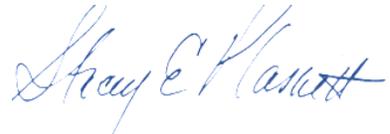
Sincerely,



Abigail D. Spanberger
Member of Congress



Rodney Davis
Member of Congress



Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress

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Other Signatories

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