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VERMONT'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION ASKS THE FCC FOR MORE TIME TO CHALLENGE ITS MAPS

Montpelier, Vermont – Congressman Peter Welch (D-VT) and Senators Patrick J. Leahy (D-VT) and Bernard Sanders (I-VT) sent a letter this week to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), urging it and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to extend the window for people to check and challenge its map.

The map will be used to allocate federal funds for broadband deployment, but it contradicts both records from the State of Vermont and the reported experiences of many Vermonters who lack access to high-speed broadband.

Should the maps go without correction, Vermont may not receive adequate federal funding for broadband deployment.

“The availability of high-speed broadband in a rural state like Vermont is essential for the success of small businesses, a key ingredient in a quality education system, and important to our overall quality of life,” the lawmakers wrote. “The importance of accurate reporting, therefore, cannot be overstated as we strive to deploy broadband in the areas of greatest need throughout our country.”

The lawmakers also urged the NTIA to expedite the release of the initial \$100 million minimum distribution included under the NTIA's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. An additional \$37.1 billion in BEAD funding will be allocated to states determined in part by the FCC's coverage data.

"We believe there are up to 20,000 addresses that have service that's incorrectly reported on the FCC Map. Each address that's corrected means \$4,000-\$5,000 in additional federal funding for Vermont. This could mean tens of millions of dollars to get Vermonters connected and also reduce their monthly bill for service," said Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) Executive Director Christine Hallquist.

According to the Vermont Department of Public Service, 80 percent of Vermonters can only access broadband that is 25/3 or slower, a speed FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel has termed "behind the times" and "harmful." The state's data underscores the importance of ensuring accurate FCC data and adequate federal funding for broadband deployment across the State of Vermont.

To read the full text of the letter, please click [here](#).

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