



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Heryn Herzog, Communications & Outreach Coordinator
Vermont Community Broadband Board
phone: (802) 522-3396 email: Heryn.Herzog@Vermont.gov

VERMONT COMMUNITY BROADBAND BOARD ISSUES “CALL TO ACTION” FOR VERMONTERS TO CHALLENGE WRONG FCC MAP DATA

Montpelier, Vermont –The Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) is calling on all Vermonters to check their addresses on the FCC National Broadband Map and file a challenge if the information is incorrect. Correcting addresses that are incorrectly listed as served at speeds of 25/3 Mbps or greater by a wired or licensed wireless provider could mean millions of additional federal dollars to build out 100/100 Mbps fiber broadband across the state. The map shows service at addresses as reported by providers.

“In the year 2022, in the richest country in the history of the world, high-speed internet access is no longer a luxury,” said Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT). “It is a critically important public utility that is essential to our economy, health care, education, infrastructure, and more. Too many rural Vermont communities have waited too long for access to quality, affordable internet. In the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, we were able to secure historic funding to expand broadband access – an important step in the right direction. But we still have work left to do. I hope my fellow Vermonters will join us in making the FCC National Broadband Map as accurate as possible so that Vermonters in every corner of our state can receive high-speed, reliable broadband.”

“I urge Vermonters to take a few minutes to contact the FCC to make their voices heard. For too long, Vermonters living in the most rural parts of our state have disproportionately suffered from inadequate access to quality, high-speed broadband services. We all should be concerned the FCC’s new National Broadband Map inaccurately represents our state’s ability to connect with

the global economy, which will prevent Vermont from receiving the Federal funds we need to build out affordable broadband networks. I look forward to working with Senator Sanders, Representative Welch, and the FCC to address these inaccuracies, but Vermonters whose access and service is inaccurately listed must make their situation known to the FCC,” said Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT).

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, created through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill enacted last year, provides each state will receive a minimum of \$100 million to fund the construction of high-speed internet access. An additional \$37.1 billion is then distributed to states based on the total number of unserved locations relative to the national total.

“The FCC map poses a challenge to Vermont's broadband build-out. The map is missing or incorrectly lists the location of over 60,000 broadband-serviceable locations. The map also lists service availability levels far beyond what the state has found through its mapping and what we are hearing about from residents. This is the chance for Vermonters to join together and challenge incorrect data and make broadband more affordable,” says Christine Hallquist, VCBB Executive Director. “We’ve calculated that, on average, for every additional \$50 million the state can offer Communications Union Districts as grants rather than forcing them to borrow the money, a Vermonter’s internet bill will drop by \$10 per month.”

“The FCC’s National Broadband Map doesn’t reflect what Vermonters know to be true: many folks in our communities don’t have reliable broadband service. That’s a problem. We need to do everything we can to lower costs and expand broadband access for every Vermonter, and that means making sure the FCC has accurate data. I encourage everyone to go online, check their address on the FCC’s map, and file a challenge if the information listed isn’t accurate. Together, we can set the record straight and help Vermonters get the affordable and reliable internet service they need to thrive,” said U.S. Representative and Senator-Elect Peter Welch (D-VT).

States have until mid-January to challenge locations incorrectly classified on the new FCC Map. The better the map reflects the true number of unserved and underserved addresses, the more money Vermont will get, meaning more affordable internet service for Vermonters.

“As a small rural state, Vermont really needs the FCC’s maps to show the reality of the internet we know and live with, not a desk-top picture based on best-guess data. The FCC is asking folks with boots on the ground to check their maps to see – is there really service where the FCC maps say there is, and is it really as fast as they say it is? If you live or work at an address, you know best if the maps are getting it right. The FCC maps will be the basis for dividing up millions of federal dollars among the states to expand access to affordable internet service. Vermont needs to maximize its share of those federal dollars, so this is an ‘all hands on deck’ call to our citizens to take a moment to check their address on the internet coverage map, and to let the FCC know if their information is wrong – that is what the challenge process is all about,” said Vermont Department of Public Service Commissioner June Tierney.

To file a challenge, go to [Broadband Data Collection Consumer Information | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](#) and type in your address. Your home should appear on

the map and list services providers claim to have available for purchase at your location. If your location is missing or inaccurately reflected on the map, you can submit a location challenge to correct it. The link to correct information on an existing location is to the right of the address on the map. You can add a location by clicking on the map where the location should be and then clicking the “challenge location” button.

If the information about the service provided at your location is wrong, click the “availability challenge” button, bringing up a form where you can select a provider to challenge. Scroll down, complete the form, selecting the reason for your challenge from the drop-down list. You can describe your experience and upload files to support your challenge, check the certification box, and click “submit.”

Reasons to challenge include the provider denied a request for service at your location, the provider does not offer the technology reported to be offered at your location, the provider does not offer the speeds reported to be available at your location, provider needed to build new equipment at your location, a wireless or satellite signal is not available at your location, provider failed to schedule a service installation within ten business days of a request, the provider did not install the service at the agreed-upon time, or the provider requested more than the standard installation fee to connect service.

For assistance, please call Consumer Affairs Hotline (800) 622-4496. The deadline to challenge the data is January 13, 2023.

For video instructions on how to file a challenge, go to [How to Submit an Availability Challenge - YouTube](#).

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Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05601-2601

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