



## NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

July 10, 2023

Governor Kathy Hochul  
2nd Floor  
State Capitol Building  
Albany NY, 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

As you know, earlier this week, the federal government announced multi-state allocations of a total of \$42.45 billion in High-Speed Internet Grants, including nearly \$665 million for New York State.<sup>1</sup> We write to urge you to direct this funding to be utilized to prioritize the needs of unserved followed by underserved communities throughout New York.

This funding is intended “to deploy affordable, reliable high-speed Internet service to everyone in America.” As you know, this funding provides a significant opportunity to connect all New Yorkers to high-speed internet. In an increasingly connected world, high-speed internet is no longer a luxury, but a necessity. For a growing number of New Yorkers, it is not only how they send and receive information, but also how they “commute” to work, do their homework, complete college courses, and much more.

Despite our many efforts, there are far too many residents, especially those in rural parts of the State, who do not have access, or very limited access, to high-speed internet. The communities that do not have any access are completely unserved due to a lack of investment, their relative remoteness, and challenges related to the costs and complexity of putting in place the necessary infrastructure. The more than 130,000 New Yorkers that live in unserved areas live in a location that has no fixed wireless service or wired service with speeds of less than 25Mbps download available.<sup>2</sup> These individuals and the communities they live in face challenges with the delivery of services and access to critical information and should be prioritized when funds are disbursed.

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<https://internetforall.gov/news-media/biden-harris-administration-announces-state-allocations-4245-billion-high-speed-internet>

<sup>2</sup> Public Service Law Section 224-c(1)(c)

As we saw during the height of the COVID pandemic, many had to deploy creative solutions at local expense to provide their residents with access to basic mandatory services that only high-speed internet would allow. One school district was forced to send school buses with Wi-Fi capabilities to students' homes. Although these efforts should be applauded, not all unserved and underserved New Yorkers live in communities that are capable of bridging the gap.

Today, more than ever, access to high-speed internet is a necessity for work, school, and more. We cannot rely upon the creativity of local communities to ensure people have access. We have a responsibility to find a permanent solution. This recent announcement of funding provides an opportunity to solve this problem and ensure all unserved and underserved New Yorkers have access to high-speed internet.

For these reasons, we again urge you to direct this funding be prioritized and utilized for unserved followed by underserved areas throughout our state. Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to discussing this further with you and your Administration.

Sincerely,




Robert G. Ort  
Senate Minority Leader  
62<sup>nd</sup> District



Senator Andrew Lanza  
24<sup>th</sup> District




Senator Peter Oberacker  
51<sup>st</sup> District



Senator Tom O'Mara  
58<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Anthony Palumbo  
1<sup>st</sup> District



Senator Pam Helming  
54<sup>th</sup> District



Senator George Borrello  
57<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Jim Tedisco  
44<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Daniel G. Stec  
45<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Patrick Gallivan  
60<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Alexis Weik  
8<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Joseph Griffo  
53<sup>rd</sup> District



Senator Mario Mattera  
2<sup>nd</sup> District



Senator Mark Walczyk  
49<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Jake Ashby  
43<sup>rd</sup> District



Senator William Weber  
38<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Dean Murray  
3<sup>rd</sup> District



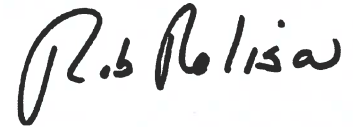
Senator Steve Rhoads  
5<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Jack M. Martins  
7<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick  
9<sup>th</sup> District



Senator Rob Rolison  
39<sup>th</sup> District