

USVI Among Recipients Approved for Broadband Equity Program, Securing \$27 Million for High-Speed Internet Expansion

The NTIA has approved the U.S. Virgin Islands' proposal for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, allocating over \$27 million to improve high-speed internet access and close the digital divide in the territory

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The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has approved the U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' Initial Proposals for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, a key component of the Biden administration's "Internet for All" initiative.

This approval allows these regions to request funding and commence the implementation of the BEAD program, aimed at closing the digital divide and achieving the president's goal of providing affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet service to all Americans.

Today's action enables:

- U.S. Virgin Islands: Over \$27 million
- Utah: Over \$317 million
- Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands: Over \$80 million

"Thanks to President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Department of Commerce is ensuring everyone in Utah, the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and all across America, has access to affordable, reliable high-speed Internet," said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. "Congratulations to the teams in Utah, Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. We look forward to working with you all to ensure everyone in your state and territories is connected."

The BEAD program, authorized by Mr. Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, is a \$42.45 billion state grant initiative. This funding will be used to deploy or upgrade high-speed Internet networks, ensuring all regions have access to reliable, affordable, high-speed Internet service. Once deployment goals are achieved, any remaining funds can be allocated to high-speed Internet adoption, training, and workforce development efforts, according to the release.

"Today, Utah, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands can move their Internet for All efforts from planning to action," said Alan Davidson, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information and NTIA Administrator. "I congratulate the state and territory broadband offices for developing strong proposals for how they will connect all of their residents to high-speed Internet service."

BEAD-eligible entities—comprising the 56 states, territories, and the District of Columbia—are required to submit an Initial Proposal to NTIA for approval. This proposal must detail plans to spend their BEAD allocation to deliver high-speed Internet access to all unserved and underserved locations within their borders. All states submitted their Initial Proposals by December 27, 2023.

NTIA provides updates on the status of all 56 states and territories' Initial Proposal here: [BEAD Initial Proposal Progress Dashboard](#). Approval of Initial Proposals will continue on a rolling basis. One year from Initial Proposal approval, states must submit a Final Proposal that details, among other things, the outcome of the subgrantee selection process and how the state will ensure universal coverage.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes a historic \$65 billion investment to expand affordable and reliable high-speed Internet access across U.S. communities. NTIA has launched a series of new high-speed Internet grant programs funded by the law to build high-speed Internet infrastructure, create more low-cost high-speed Internet service options, and address digital equity and inclusion needs.

For more information on the high-speed Internet service programs, visit InternetforAll.gov.