



CALIFORNIA EMERGING TECHNOLOGY FUND

Recommendations from CETF and Partners on Federal Economic Stimulus Investments in Rural Broadband

Acronyms

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Rural Utilities Services (RUS)
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
- Distance Learning, Telemedicine and Broadband Program (DLTBD)
- Broadband Deployment Programs (BDP) [included both the Broadband and the Wireless Programs]
- California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF)
- Internet Service Providers (ISPs) [included any medium and technology]

CETF Recommendations

- Support the Senate’s Bill amendment to increase the USDA RUS DLTBD from \$2.825 billion to \$3.025 billion.
- Support the Senate’s Bill amendment to increase the NTIA BDP from \$2.825 billion to \$9 billion.
- Support the Senate’s Bill amendment to transfer 50% of NTIA BDP \$9 billion for grants, loans and loan guarantee, into USDA RUS DLTBD. This would reduce NTIA BDP from \$9 billion to \$4.5 billion, while increasing USDA RUS from \$3.025 billion to \$7.5 billion.
- Within NTIA’s Wireless Broadband Deployment Program:
 - Re-classify the term “wireless voice service” to “wireless voice and data service”.
 - Include “mobile data service” to the definition of the term “wireless voice and data service”.
 - Replace “voice service” with “voice and data service” when describing the “wireless voice and data services”.
 - Reverse the funding distributions of “Wireless Voice and Data Service” and “Advanced Wireless Broadband Service” from 25% and 75% to 75% and 25%.
- Within NTIA wireline Broadband Deployment Program, modify the funding distributions of “Basic Broadband Service” and “Advanced Broadband Service” from 25% and 75% to 50% and 50%.
- Specific to rural areas, define NTIA BDP “unserved” as an area that contains only dial-up Internet access and/or broadband Internet access where the highest rate in either direction does not exceed 200 Kbps, or contains no ISPs.
- Specific to rural areas, define NTIA BDP “underserved” as an area that contains 1 or 2 ISPs offering Basic Broadband, Advanced Broadband, Advanced Wireless Broadband services or broadband access where the highest rate in either direction does not exceed 1 Mbps but is not less than 200 Kbps.
- Specific to rural areas, define NTIA BDP “served” as an area that contains more than 2 ISPs offering Basic Broadband, Advanced Broadband, Advanced Wireless Broadband services or broadband access where the highest rate in either direction exceeds 1 Mbps.
- Within USDA RUS DLTBD, specific to rural areas, define “sufficient access to high-speed broadband” as having 1 or 2 ISPs offering Basic Broadband, Advance Broadband, Advanced Wireless Broadband services or broadband access where the highest rate in either direction exceeds 1 Mbps.
- USDA RUS adopt CETF recommended definitions for the terms: “served”, “underserved” and “unserved”.

- USDA RUS to define “High Speed Internet Access” as any service that meets or exceeds any of NTIA’s three broadband definitions consisting of Basic Broadband Access, Advanced Broadband Access and Advanced Wireless Broadband Access.
- Recommend that the USDA and NTIA leverage the state-level expertise, specific to closing the Digital Divide and distributing funds to organization based on strict business proposals, found in established state-level organizations such CETF for grants, loans and loan guarantees destined to their respective state.
- USDA RUS top priority for awarding funds should be “projects that cost effectively expand or augment existing ISP infrastructure” because such projects are typically less expensive than new build outs and can be immediately implemented as opposed to initiating extended planning, engineering and deployment programs.
- USDA RUS DLTBD and NTIA BDP should not be capable of awarding a broadband deployment grant, loan or loan guarantee to a project that do not meet the minimum transmission rates as specified by the Wireless Broadband Access, Basic Broadband Access or Advanced Broadband Access terms.
- USDA RUS DLTBD and NTIA BDP should offer full transparency regarding project submissions, approvals, and rejections. If a project is awarded a grant, loan or loan guarantee, non-proprietary full descriptions and scope of project area should be published.
- CETF recommends the following definition for “open access” in order to ensure ISP competition within a rural environment exists without the need of building out several parallel physical networks. A single physical network could facilitate many retail ISPs.

The implementation of technology and applications for an Internet access service that consists of:

- A competitively priced, commercially supported wholesale offer.
- Bundled and unbundled (a la carte) wholesale service components.
- Wholesale user service components to include (if relevant) customer premise equipment, 0 mile access, last mile access, aggregation, backhaul, transport and transmission and ultimate hand-off
- Wholesale Quality of Service (QoS), service parameters and Service Level Agreements (SLA) at par with services operated by the underlying physical network operator.