

## **Support for the Broadband Data Improvement Act**

*Introduced by Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawai'i), Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), and Jon Tester (D-Mont.)*

“In order to identify and connect those Americans who do not have access to broadband internet service, we must improve the data that makes up the federal broadband map. By moving away from the current census block approach to one that utilizes shapefiles plus crowdsourcing, the *Broadband Data Improvement Act of 2019* would more clearly identify served and unserved areas and will put the Commission on the surest path to significant mapping improvements in the shortest timeframe. We applaud Sens. Capito and Schatz for introducing this important bipartisan legislation and look forward to working with the committee, the FCC and all stakeholders on improving our national broadband map.” – **NCTA-The Internet & Television Association**

“For far too long, imprecise broadband availability maps have frustrated unserved rural consumers and undermined the effectiveness of programs that would otherwise help in delivering services to them. The kinds of steps outlined in the *Broadband Data Improvement Act of 2019*—more granular reporting, better standards for reporting, and robust validation and challenge procedures—represent a critical combination of measures to improve broadband mapping. Of course, these measures all must be seen as part of an ongoing conversation, but they represent significant building blocks for steps to follow. NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association thanks Senators Capito, Schatz, Moran, and Tester for leading the way on these issues.” – **Shirley Bloomfield, CEO of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association**

“I appreciate the great efforts by Senators Capito and Schatz to fix the Commission’s broken broadband mapping process and provide a credible and definable framework, including a challenge process. This bill would lead to a more accurate and ultimately more helpful picture of broadband coverage, which would allow for more sound decisions and a real focus on those without service today.” – **Federal Communications Commissioner Michael O’Rielly**

“The American Farm Bureau Federation supports this bipartisan bill to improve broadband data collection. Broadband is no longer a luxury. It’s a necessity. With limited funding and an overabundance of need, it is critical for federal programs to use accurate broadband maps to target and distribute its funding. Farm Bureau applauds Sen. Capito and her colleagues for their leadership on this vital issue and we will work with them in favor of swift consideration of this measure.” – **Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation**

“*The Broadband Data Improvement Act of 2019* is a great step forward on the important issue of broadband connectivity. The current mapping data vastly undercounts the number of people without access. To help close the broadband gap, we need better data to enable better decisions. Measures that improve the granularity, collection and oversight of data, which are included in this bill, will improve the data and access to broadband across the country. We applaud Senators Capito and Schatz as they continue to lead on this issue and look forward to working with Congress towards our shared goal of providing better connectivity for all Americans.” – **John Kahan, chief data analytics officer for Microsoft Corporation**

“CCA appreciates Congress’s continued bipartisan interest in producing more reliable broadband coverage maps. Provisions in this bill, including standardizing and defining parameters for coverage, will ensure that policies are based on data that more closely resembles the on the ground experience of American consumers and will help close the digital divide. ” – **Steven K. Berry, president and CEO, Competitive Carriers Association (CCA)**

“Accurate broadband coverage maps are a missing ingredient in the pursuit to make rural broadband access a reality”. “By emphasizing the need for better broadband coverage data, this proposal will provide a much-needed look at the true scope of the digital divide. Expanded broadband access is key to the success of rural communities, and we welcome this proposal and thank Senators Capito and Schatz for their leadership.” – **Jeffrey Connor, COO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)**

“West Virginia has made significant progress in bridging the digital divide. However, in order to fully capture the potential for success, we need more granular mapping data to accurately identify unserved and underserved areas in rural West Virginia. Too many of our residents and businesses are being misrepresented and ultimately left out of being able to access critical federal broadband infrastructure funding programs as a result of census block level reporting. This legislation goes a long way to creating a more accurate accounting of the level of service that is being delivered across the nation. I commend Senator Capito for her efforts with this legislation and for her leadership on broadband deployment through her Capito Connect Initiative.” – **Rob Hinton, chairman of the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council**