

**Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record**

**Subcommittee on Communications and Technology  
Hearing on  
“Trump FCC: Four Years of Lost Opportunities”  
September 17, 2020**

**The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner  
Federal Communications Commission**

**The Honorable Anna Eshoo (D-CA):**

1. Political files submitted to the FCC play an important role in ensuring the public knows how candidates, outside groups, and others are using the public’s airwaves for television and radio during an election. Unfortunately, the millions of documents the FCC manages are not machine readable, making meaningful analysis nearly impossible. Would you support a requirement for political files to be submitted to the FCC in a machine-readable format?

**Answer:** When the FCC addressed this issue in the 2012 Order implementing the online public file requirement, which was subsequently expanded in 2016, it rejected the argument that the Commission should require machine-readable submissions. I am open to considering whether the FCC got this issue wrong or whether the public interest counsels in favor of maintaining this approach.

2. The FCC’s 2020 Broadband Deployment Report finds that “the current speed benchmark of 25/3 Mbps remains an appropriate measure by which to assess whether a fixed service is providing advanced telecommunications capability,” specifically citing the statutory definition of “advanced telecommunications capability” as services that “enable[] users to originate and receive high-quality voice, data, graphics, and *video* telecommunications.” (¶13; 47 U.S.C. § 1302(d)(1) (emphasis added)). However, when I look at the recommended bandwidth for Zoom, Google Meet, and Cisco WebEx, each requires upload speeds of 3 Mbps for high quality video.

Given that millions of households are juggling with parents participating in video calls at the same time as students are participating in class via video conference, does this speed threshold make sense today? What do you think is an appropriate threshold?

**Answer:** A 25/3 Mbps connection can support multiple, simultaneous video calls and otherwise delivers advanced telecommunications capability within the meaning of the statutory definition specified by Congress. That said, the FCC does not and should not limit its work to promoting the buildout of networks that meet this speed threshold. Through our universal service and other initiatives, we support providers in their

delivery of services that exceed this speed threshold. Indeed, the FCC's 2020 Broadband Deployment Report found that over 85% of Americans had access to 250/25 Mbps broadband service, representing a nearly 50% increase since 2017.

3. We often discuss the digital divide as if it's only about access to broadband when we know our country also faces an affordability crisis. Yet the FCC doesn't collect broadband pricing data.

Does the FCC have the legal authority to collect broadband pricing data? If so, why hasn't it done so?

**Answer:** The FCC conducts a survey of the fixed voice and broadband service rates offered to consumers in urban areas. The FCC uses the survey data to determine the reasonable comparability benchmarks for fixed voice and broadband rates for universal service purposes.