

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 Geoffrey Starks, 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?

Yes; making open, machine-readable data available to the public can improve the quality and usability of the data and help better inform our policymaking. In addition, the Open, Permanent, Electronic, and Necessary (OPEN) Government Data Act, signed into law on January 14, 2019, requires federal agencies to publish government data in machine-readable and open formats, so the FCC should ensure that all of our online public files comply with that law.

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?

The experience of millions of Americans working and learning from home has made it plain that households that only have access to 25/3 Mbps cannot share in all the benefits of broadband. The Commission should update its benchmark to 100 Mbps for downloads and consider a significant increase in the benchmark for upload speeds.

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?

The Commission has the authority to collect broadband pricing information and should do so because it's a critical input in understanding and combatting internet inequality. Unfortunately, the Chairman has repeatedly rejected calls for the Commission to do so.