

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery**  
**of**  
**Subcommittee on Health Chairwoman Anna G. Eshoo**

***Hearing on “Broadband Equity: Addressing Disparities in Access and Affordability”***

**May 6, 2021**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this highly important hearing. I think the digital divide is a national embarrassment and we have to solve it. Community broadband is an important part of the solution because it’s already working across the country.

Over 900 municipalities, Tribes, co-ops, and public-private partnerships operate community networks that successfully connect millions of Americans, and they can afford it. But unfortunately, 22 states have passed laws that limit these networks.

My bicameral legislation, the *Community Broadband Act*, preempts these protectionist laws to enable community networks in all states.

I’m really pleased that President Biden has included community broadband in his infrastructure proposal, and I thank Chairmen Pallone and Doyle for including my bill in the *LIFT America Act*.

Thank you for yielding time to me. I look forward to a productive hearing today and I yield back.