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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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June 26, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology Members and Staff
From: Committee Majority Staff
Re: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology Hearing on June 30, 2026

I. INTRODUCTION

The Subcommittee on Communications and Technology will hold an educational hearing on Wednesday, June 30, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. (ET) in 2123 Rayburn House Office Building. The hearing is entitled “Oversight of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration.”

II. WITNESSES

- **The Honorable Arielle Roth**, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information and Administrator, National Telecommunications and Information Administration

III. BACKGROUND

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a division of the Department of Commerce, is the Executive Branch agency principally responsible for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy issues.¹ NTIA states that its programs and policymaking focus on securing U.S. dominance in next-generation technologies, promoting efficient use of spectrum to advance America’s national and economic security, ensuring universal broadband availability in America, enhancing public safety communications, conducting cutting-edge research to inform technology policy decisions, and ensuring that the internet remains an engine for free expression and American-led innovation.² In addition to working with other Executive Branch agencies to develop policy, NTIA represents

¹ 47 U.S.C. 902(b)(2)(D).

² See About Nat’l Telecommunications and Info. Admin. (NTIA), <https://ntia.gov/page/about-ntia>.

the Executive Branch in both domestic and international telecommunications and information policy activities.³

Congress has not reauthorized NTIA since 1992, though the House passed NTIA Reauthorization Act in April 2025, reauthorizing the agency for two years. The Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026, appropriated \$50 million to NTIA.⁴ The total NTIA budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 is \$47 million.⁵ The House Appropriations Committee-approved FY27 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act appropriates \$47 million to NTIA.⁶

IV. SELECTED ISSUES

A. Broadband Deployment

Congress provided \$65 billion through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to support broadband activities.⁷ Most of this funding (\$48.2 billion) went to NTIA for various grant programs:

- \$42.45 billion for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, which was intended to provide grants for last-mile deployment in unserved and underserved areas;
- \$2.75 billion for the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program and the Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, which were intended to provide funding for broadband adjacent priorities such as buying smart devices and creating educational programs to teach consumers how to use connected devices;
- \$1 billion for the Middle Mile Grant Program, to support the deployment of middle-mile infrastructure; and
- \$2 billion for the Tribal Connectivity Program, which supports connectivity-related activities for Tribal communities.

The BEAD Program provides grants to states and territories (eligible entities) to then distribute to broadband providers to deploy last-mile broadband at speeds of at least 100/20 Mbps to unserved and underserved homes and businesses. During the Biden Administration, some eligible entities, members of Congress, and broadband providers raised concerns about NTIA's administration of the BEAD program.⁸ Complaints included pressure from NTIA to

³ See Office of International Affairs (OIA), NTIA, <https://www.ntia.gov/office/office-international-affairs-oia>.

⁴ Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026, Pub. L. No. 119-74 (2026), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/4366>.

⁵ FY 2027 Budget as Presented to Congress, NTIA (Apr. 2026), <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2026-04/FY2027-NTIA-CJ-Submission.pdf>.

⁶ H.R. __, FY27 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (2026), <https://appropriations.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/republicans-appropriations.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/fy27-commerce-justice-science-and-related-agencies-full-committee-mark.pdf>.

⁷ Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Pub. L. No. 117-58, div. F, tit. I et seq. (2021); *id.*, div. J.

⁸ See, e.g., Letter from Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Chair H. Morgan Griffith, and Chair Robert E. Latta to Assistant Secretary Alan Davidson (July 9, 2024), https://d1dth6e84htgma.cloudfront.net/07_09_24_Letter_to_NTIA_on_BEAD_Approvals_1a9ef45737.pdf; Letter

regulate the price of low-income broadband plans, NTIA's preference for certain broadband technologies over others, and extraneous and costly labor and climate requirements. Complying with these complicated, burdensome requirements likely led to NTIA's delay in approving initial proposals. Notably, not a single home was connected during the three years the Biden Administration ran the BEAD Program.

On June 6, 2025, the Trump NTIA issued new guidance for the BEAD Program.⁹ This guidance removed many Biden-era requirements, including the technology preference, rate regulation of low-income plans, and other burdens. The NTIA guidance also directed eligible entities to run an additional "benefit-of-the-bargain" bidding round to ensure that awards reflected the changes made by the Administration and to submit final proposals by September 4, 2025. In the year since issuing the new guidance, NTIA has approved 54 out of 56 final proposals submitted by eligible entities,¹⁰ BEAD-funded infrastructure in two states has been deployed,¹¹ and the program expects to save approximately \$21 billion on deployment costs.¹²

What to do with the remaining money is to be determined. NTIA held a listening session to gather input on how this "nondeployment" money could be used by states,¹³ and is expected to provide guidance soon. Ideas include public safety, deployment to homes and businesses that may have been missed following the initial bidding round, workforce development, and permitting.

The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TCBP) has made 275 awards totaling \$2.2 billion using money from IIJA and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.¹⁴ Earlier this month, NTIA announced two new funding opportunities for Tribal and Native communities—\$540 million for broadband connectivity under the TCBP and \$250 million for Tribal broadband use and adoption under the digital equity programs.¹⁵

from Chair Robert E. Latta et al. to Assistant Secretary Alan Davidson (Dec. 15, 2023), https://d1dth6e84htgma.cloudfront.net/12_15_23_Letter_to_NTIA_re_Rate_Regulation_42bbb6fbf4.pdf.

⁹ Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program: BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice, NTIA (Jun. 6, 2025), <https://www.ntia.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/bead-restructuring-policy-notice.pdf>.

¹⁰ BEAD Progress Dashboard, NTIA (Jun. 8, 2026), <https://www.ntia.gov/funding-programs/internet-all/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment-bead-program/progress-dashboard>.

¹¹ Jake Neenan, First BEAD-Funded Equipment Deployed in Louisiana, State Says, Broadband Breakfast (May 13, 2026), <https://broadbandbreakfast.com/first-bead-funded-equipment-deployed-in-louisiana-state-says/>.

¹² *A Review of Broadband Deployment Funding at the Department of Commerce: Hearing before the S. Subcomm. on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies of the S. Comm. on Appropriations*, Feb. 10, 2026 (testimony of Sec. of Commerce Howard Lutnick).

¹³ NTIA Listening Session on the Use of BEAD Funds Saved Through the Trump Administration's Benefit of the Bargain Reforms, NTIA (Jan. 27, 2026), <https://www.ntia.gov/federal-register-notice/2026/ntia-listening-session-use-bead-funds-saved-through-trump-administrations-benefit-bargain-reforms>.

¹⁴ Press Release, NTIA Announces Tribal Broadband Program Reforms to Maximize Tribal Connectivity and Reduce Red Tape (Nov. 12, 2025), <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2025/ntia-announces-tribal-broadband-program-reforms-maximize-tribal-connectivity-and-reduce-red-tape>.

¹⁵ Press Release, NTIA Announces Two New Funding Opportunities to Expand Broadband Connectivity on Tribal Lands (Jun. 17, 2026), <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2026/ntia-announces-two-new-funding-opportunities-expand-broadband-connectivity-tribal-lands>.

NTIA awarded grants for the Middle Mile Grant Program in Summer 2023. It allocated \$980 million to fund projects for the construction, improvement, or acquisition of middle mile infrastructure covering more than 370 counties across 40 states and Puerto Rico.¹⁶

Although the Biden Administration made some digital equity awards under the IJIA programs,¹⁷ President Trump declared the non-Tribal components unconstitutional because of racial preferences.¹⁸ The National Digital Inclusion Alliance has challenged this determination in federal court. Earlier this month, Department of Justice lawyers told the court that the program could move forward without consideration of race.¹⁹

B. Electromagnetic Spectrum

NTIA is statutorily responsible for managing spectrum use by federal agencies,²⁰ and is actively pursuing innovative approaches to protect federal interests, while also granting greater access to spectrum for commercial purposes. NTIA is also responsible for communicating the Executive Branch's position on communications issues, including those related to federal spectrum, to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).²¹

The Working Families Tax Cuts directed NTIA, in consultation with the FCC, to identify 500 MHz of Federal spectrum between 1.3 and 10.5 GHz for reallocation from federal use to non-federal use, shared federal and non-federal use, or a combination thereof, for full-power commercial licensed use,²² which the FCC is to auction within 8 years.²³ NTIA has begun working to carry out this mandate. It has identified 5 MHz of spectrum from the 1675-1680 MHz band for reallocation,²⁴ and is studying the 7.125-7.4 GHz, the 4.4-4.94 GHz, and the 2.69-2.9 GHz bands.²⁵

C. International Leadership

NTIA plays a key role in the United States' participation in international telecommunications fora, including the World Radiocommunications Conference (WRC). The

¹⁶ Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program, NTIA, <https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/funding-programs/enabling-middle-mile-broadband-infrastructure-program>.

¹⁷ Jake Neenan, *NTIA Approves \$369 Million in Digital Equity Grants*, BROADBAND BREAKFAST (Jan. 17, 2025), <https://broadbandbreakfast.com/ntia-approves-369-million-in-digital-equity-grants/>.

¹⁸ Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump), Truth Social (May 8, 2025, 4:38 PM), <https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114474136573150113>.

¹⁹ Jericho Casper, *Digital Equity Act Program Can Proceed Without Race Criteria, Trump Attorneys Say*, BROADBAND BREAKFAST (Jun. 24, 2026), <https://broadbandbreakfast.com/digital-equity-program-can-proceed-without-race-criteria-trump-administration-attorneys-say-the-administration-urged-the-court-to-rule-immediately-while-plaintiffs-disputed-whether-the/>.

²⁰ 47 U.S.C. 902 § (b)(2)(A).

²¹ 47 U.S.C. 902 § (b)(2)(J).

²² One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Pub. L. No. 119-21 § 40002(c) (2025) ("Working Families Tax Cuts").

²³ *Id.* § 40002(d).

²⁴ Letter from Arielle Roth, Asst. Sec. for Communications and Information, to the Hon. Brendan Carr, Chairman, FCC (Feb. 26, 2026), <https://www.ntia.gov/sites/default/files/2026-03/1675-mhz-identification-letter.pdf>.

²⁵ Press Release, Plan to Repurpose 2.7 GHz Band Clears Key Milestone, Fueling U.S. 6G Leadership, <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2026/plan-repurpose-27-ghz-band-clears-key-milestone-fueling-us-6g-leadership>.

WRC is held every four years to review and update the international treaties governing spectrum and satellite orbits.²⁶ WRC last took place in 2023 in Dubai. On December 1, 2025, the ITU announced that the 2027 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-27) will be held in Shanghai, China.²⁷

The United States' WRC delegation is typically led by an ambassador appointed for the conference and is comprised of the Department of State diplomatic staff, as well as subject matter experts from NTIA, as well as the FCC. The U.S. delegation adopts policy positions after significant interagency coordination, including from NTIA, as well as feedback from industry stakeholders. The delegation then takes these priorities to the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) regional working group meetings for discussion, and ultimately, works toward adoption of these priorities in the region's slate of proposals for discussion at WRC.

D. The Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund

The Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund (Innovation Fund) provides grants to facilitate the promotion and deployment of open and interoperable wireless networks by accelerating commercial deployment of interoperable 5G equipment; promoting a multi-vendor environment; identifying compliance standards; and promoting security features in these networks. The Innovation Fund initially received \$1.5 billion under the CHIPS and Science Act,²⁸ however, \$850 million was rescinded in the Working Families Tax Cuts.²⁹

NTIA has held two funding rounds of the Innovation Fund.³⁰ The first provided up to \$140.5 million for research, development, testing, and evaluation; the second provided up to \$420 million for open radio unit commercialization and innovation. NTIA is currently developing a third Notice of Funding Opportunity for the remaining money that will focus on AI RAN—U.S.-based AI-native network architecture.³¹

E. First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet)

The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) was created in 2012 as an independent authority within NTIA charged with developing a reliable, secure, and interoperable nationwide public safety broadband network (NPSBN) to support the communications needs of first responders and other public safety officials. In March 2017, AT&T won a 25-year contract to build the network.

²⁶Int'l Telecomm Union, World Radiocommunication Conferences, <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/conferences/wrc/Pages/default.aspx> (last visited Mar. 13, 2026).

²⁷ Press Release, Int'l Telecomm Union, China to host ITU World Radiocommunication Conference 2027 in Shanghai (Dec. 1, 2025), <https://www.itu.int/en/mediacentre/Pages/PR-2025-12-01-WRC27-Shanghai.aspx>.

²⁸ CHIPS and Science Act, Pub. L. No. 117-167 § 106 (2022).

²⁹ Working Families Tax Cut Act § 40011.

³⁰ The Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund, NTIA, <https://www.ntia.gov/funding-programs/public-wireless-supply-chain-innovation-fund/public-wireless-supply-chain-innovation-fund/grant-programs> (last visited Jun., 26, 2026).

³¹ NTIA Seeks Feedback on New Direction for Innovation Fund that Focuses on AI RAN, NTIA (Mar. 10, 2026), <https://www.ntia.gov/blog/2026/ntia-seeks-feedback-new-direction-innovation-fund-focuses-ai-ran>.

FirstNet's authorization expires in February 2027. The House has passed a bill that reauthorizes FirstNet for 10 years and would place it directly under control of NTIA.³² It would also make changes to leadership positions and components of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network, including provisions to increase transparency, ensure accountability, and strengthen FirstNet.

V. KEY QUESTIONS

The hearing may include discussion on the following key issues:

- What is the status of BEAD deployment and nondeployment funding?
- How is the FCC's deregulatory agenda helping to expand the availability of communications services?
- What is NTIA's progress toward identifying federal spectrum that can be reallocated for commercial use?
- How is NTIA supporting efforts to maintain American leadership at international communications forums?

VI. STAFF CONTACTS

If you have any questions regarding this hearing, please contact Michael Essington or John Lin of the Majority Committee Staff at (202) 225-3641.

³² First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act of 2026, H.R. 7386 (2026).