

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 21, 2026

The Honorable Arielle Roth

Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information  
National Telecommunications and Information Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Roth,

We write to express our deep concern with the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) lack of clarity with respect to \$1 billion in funding currently being withheld from Georgia. It is the State's intention to use these funds for critical safety and connectivity improvements that align with both federal and state priorities.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, we urge you to refocus on closing the digital divide in Georgia and release these funds immediately.

On June 6, 2025, NTIA issued its Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program: BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice, which required the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) to remove its fiber preference and rerun its initial grant round. This restructure ultimately reduced the cost of infrastructure subawards<sup>2</sup> but further delayed the deployment of broadband service promised to Georgians over four years ago. We were glad to see NTIA approve Georgia's updated final proposal on November 18, 2025,<sup>3</sup> and we hope that this represents the final administrative hurdle before delivering new broadband connections across Georgia and providing our communities with the tools and infrastructure they need to be competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Unfortunately, NTIA's policy notice also paused nearly \$1 billion in authorized funding for critical safety and connectivity improvements designed to complement the deployment of new broadband connections in Georgia.<sup>4</sup> In accordance with the BEAD program, GTA conducted outreach with local governments, community organizations, industry and workforce organizations, and other stakeholders to identify the highest "non-deployment" broadband needs

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<sup>1</sup> Grace Tepper, *Reminder: What BEAD Final Proposals Looked Like When Submitted to NTIA*, Benton Institute for Broadband and Society (Nov. 18, 2025), <https://www.benton.org/blog/reminder-what-bead-final-proposals-looked-when-submitted-ntia>.

<sup>2</sup> *Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program: BEAD Restructuring Policy Notice*, Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Jun. 6, 2025), <https://www.ntia.gov/other-publication/2025/bead-restructuring-policy-notice>.

<sup>3</sup> NTIA Announces Approval of 18 BEAD Final Proposals, National Telecommunications and Information Administration Office of Public Affairs (Nov. 18, 2025), <https://www.ntia.gov/press-release/2025/ntia-announces-approval-18-bead-final-proposals>.

<sup>4</sup> *Board of Directors Presentation*, Georgia Technology Authority (Sept. 11, 2025), <https://gta.georgia.gov/document/document/gta-board-mtg-agenda-11-sept-2025-final-w-video/download>.

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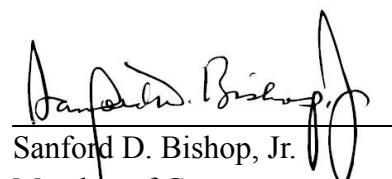
in Georgia.<sup>5</sup> Informed by these efforts, GTA aims to use leftover BEAD funding to upgrade 911 connectivity service; improve telehealth resources for seniors, veterans, and children in rural areas; expand the use of precision agriculture technologies to increase farm yields; establish device access and education programs to increase economic output; and much more.<sup>6</sup> However, the June 2025 policy notice<sup>7</sup> explicitly withheld pre-approved funding for these projects, and your comments on October 28, 2025 cast further doubt on whether Georgia will ever receive this essential funding that Congress has authorized and appropriated.<sup>8</sup> As a result, Georgians continue to live without critical technology upgrades that help save lives and spur economic growth.

Georgians are tired of political agendas and bureaucratic delays that deny their communities 21<sup>st</sup>-century connectivity and technology upgrades. It is past time to put shovels in the ground, deliver next-generation connectivity to unserved and underserved communities, and close the digital divide in Georgia. We urge NTIA to release all non-deployment funds immediately.

Sincerely,



Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



David Scott  
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress

<sup>5</sup> *Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Grant Program Initial Proposal Volume II*, Georgia Technology Authority (Sept. 26, 2025), <https://gta.georgia.gov/news/2024-09-26/georgia-receives-approval-bead-initial-proposal-volume-ii>.

<sup>6</sup> *Id*

<sup>7</sup> *Supra* note 2

<sup>8</sup> Arielle Roth, *Making BEAD Work: How NTIA Is Working to Minimize Defaults and Deliver Universal Broadband*, The Hudson Institute (Oct. 28, 2025), <https://www.ntia.gov/speech/testimony/2025/remarks-assistant-secretary-arielle-roth-hudson-institute>.