

**For Immediate Release**

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**NEXT CENTURY CITIES SUBMITS COMMENTS ON THE FCC'S  
REQUEST FOR RESPONSE TO THE EMERGENCY BROADBAND BENEFIT PROGRAM**

**Washington, D.C. (January 25, 2021)** – Today, Next Century Cities (“NCC”) submitted comments in response to the Wireline Competition Bureau’s January 4th [public notice](#) requesting comments on how the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC” or “Commission”) should implement the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program as designated in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. NCC’s [comments](#) focus on developing an inclusive and competitive list of participating providers, incorporating pricing disclosure requirements to help the Commission assess affordability, and partnering with local and state officials who are critical partners for promoting the program.

Next Century Cities encourages member municipalities to submit feedback to the FCC. Reply comments are due by **Tuesday, February 16, 2021**. NCC has prepared a guideline for submitting comments that can be found [here](#). Local officials should contact **Ryan Johnston, Policy Counsel for Federal Programs** for additional information about the filing process and requesting meetings with agency staff.

**Johnston** offered the following remarks regarding the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program:

“This program stands as a policy monument that recognizes affordability as one of the largest barriers to broadband adoption in the United States. The Commission has a unique opportunity to redouble their efforts aimed at connecting low-income households, and bringing affordable high-quality broadband within reach for all Americans regardless of where they are. Making this program as inclusive as possible for both providers and consumers supports the underlying legislative intent to support affordable access across the nation.

“The Commission must work with local officials and community leaders who are all too aware of the toll that the pandemic has taken on their communities. These partnerships are essential to ensuring the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program delivers on its promise. Otherwise, eligible populations who desperately need support will not benefit as intended.”

Elevating the needs of communities nationwide is critical to the success of the program’s implementation. **Corian Zacher, Policy Counsel for State and Local Initiatives** emphasizes the importance of getting local insights on program administration:

“Affordability is one of the greatest barriers for low-income households to get and maintain the baseline connectivity needed to access vital resources. Local officials and community leaders, those closest to people in need, frequently lack the capacity or are simply left out of federal policymaking. There is an onus on the Commission to consult with experienced and dedicated local and state officials. Additionally, the FCC must work to ensure that every person who is eligible for the benefit has a high-quality provider in their area who can offer service.”

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