

**For Immediate Release**

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**NEXT CENTURY CITIES Highlights the Dangers of the End of the ACP for Broadband Affordability Efforts and Urges Congress to Refund the ACP Before the End of May.**

**Washington, D.C. (April 30, 2024)** - Today marks the final day of the Affordable Connectivity Program's last fully funded month. With the end of April, many ACP providers will offer a lower benefit of \$14 for the month of May, while others may simply begin the process of transferring ACP customers to other plans or, in a worst case scenario, removing them from plans altogether. This could mean that over 20 million households could soon find themselves paying significantly more for or losing their Internet connection entirely.

This potential loss of connectivity for so many households is unacceptable. Fully participating in our ever increasingly digital society requires an Internet connection, for work, education, accessing social benefits, and keeping connected with friends and family. To relegate households to lower tier plans or no connectivity at all cuts directly against the digital access and adoption efforts that have taken center stage for the last four years.

**Andy Stutzman, Executive Director at Next Century Cities, remarked:**

"The loss of the ACP will affect the Internet connections for a sixth of the households across the country. We've heard far too often that there is bipartisan support for ACP, however we have yet to see action on this front. Affordable high speed Internet connections provide the ability to work and study from home which has an economic and social impact for families. With the passage of the Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act, Congress could still show that they can work together to protect the livelihood of their constituents."

**Ryan Johnston, Senior Policy Counsel for Federal Programs, added:**

"For too long policymakers on Capitol Hill have debated about whether the ACP is worth saving. Instead, they have chosen to potentially forsake tens of millions of households leaving them with only the lowest tiers of Internet access, if they can afford to stay connected at all.

"The final month of the ACP provides households with participating providers with less than half of the benefit they have been receiving. This decrease in support may be the precipice between a household continuing to afford their current plan, needing to switch to something that fails to meet their family's needs, or being unable to remain online. This is a decision that no household should ever have to make.

“Fortunately, there is still time for Congress to pass the ACP Extension Act. Passing this bill would provide the much needed funding for the ACP to remain in effect until the end of 2024. While this is not a permanent solution, it buys ACP recipients and policymakers much needed time to determine how to permanently fund this necessary program.”

**Corian Zacher, Senior Policy Counsel for State and Local Affairs, stated:**

“The federal government has relied on trusted local partners in spreading the word about the Affordable Connectivity Program. Thanks to community leaders across the country, nearly half of all eligible households have enrolled in the program after just three years. Renewing the ACP is vitally important to preserving the trusted relationships developed across local, state, and federal partners.”

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