



In February 2021, U.S. Rep. Angie Craig of Minnesota introduced federal legislation targeted at improving broadband data in rural and underserved areas.

The FCC evaluated 5.6 million Minnesota residents and found that 5.5 million (97.5%) had access to a fixed broadband connection at 25/3 Mbps speeds. In rural areas, it found that 1.4 of 1.5 million residents (91.4%) had fixed broadband access. Of the 4.1 million urban residents evaluated, the FCC concluded that 99.8% had access to a fixed broadband connection at minimum speeds.

The State of Minnesota offers an interactive broadband map, county broadband maps, Tribal broadband maps, and makes the data available. The data in the interactive map are current as of October 2020 and the website includes a speed test that allows residents to share their actual speeds with the state.

Minnesota's data show that there are 163,000 unserved households in the state and that 1,924,000 households served with wireline service with at least 25/3 Mbps speeds. At 100/20 Mbps, 1,829,000 households are served. That number drops to 334,000 served households at 1/1 Gbps speeds. In the most connected counties, like Beltrami, Big Stone, Clearwater, Hennepin, and Lac qui Parle, broadband is available to over 99% of households.

In February 2021, Congresswoman Angie Craig of Minnesota introduced federal legislation targeted at improving broadband access data in rural and underserved areas, called the Broadband Measuring Availability and Aligning Policies Task Force Act (Broadband MAPS Act), which would establish an FCC task force to improve broadband availability maps. In a press release announcing the legislation, Representative Craig said:

*To achieve universal broadband access in the United States, it is crucial we have a precise*

*understanding of where fixed and wireless broadband already exists and where it does not. Unfortunately, for far too long, the FCC's data collection and mapping process has yielded inaccurate and incomplete results – leaving Congress, the public, and the FCC without a clear picture of the country's broadband needs. This crucial legislation will help to identify the communities most desperately in need of support – and guide the federal government's investment decisions for years to come.*

Representative Craig also helped introduce the Accessible, Affordable Internet For All Act, which invests \$100 billion in Internet infrastructure in rural and underserved areas, and cosponsored the Accelerating Broadband Development by Empowering Local Communities Act, which would have reverted authority of 5G technologies to local governments.

BroadbandNow reports that Minnesota has 89.6% terrestrial broadband coverage and 15.1% access to a low price plan. Around 2.8 million people in Minnesota do not use the Internet at broadband speeds, according to Microsoft's data.

In Abby Olson's, Minnesota's Digital Divide: How Minnesota Can Replicate the Rural Electrification Act to Deliver Rural Broadband, she explains why expanding broadband is still a high priority in rural Minnesota. She reported that of the 185,000 Minnesota households that lack access to 25/3 Mbps broadband, 179,000 are located in rural areas.

#### Additional Resources:

- [Minnesota's Office of Broadband Deployment](#)
- [New Map & Analysis on Broadband Need for Minnesota Students](#)