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After Public Pressure with #MobileOnly Challenge, FCC to Maintain High-Quality Broadband Standards

Next Century Cities Commends FCC Shift, Will Continue #MobileOnly Challenge to Draw Attention to 24 Million Americans Still Without Fixed Broadband Access

January 19, 2018 (Washington, DC) -- Next Century Cities applauded the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) decision to maintain the federal broadband speed standard of 25/3 Mbps, announced in a [Fact Sheet](#) released yesterday by the FCC. It also saluted the 10 other partner organizations that joined together to start the [#MobileOnly Challenge](#) this month, which drew public attention to a previous FCC plan to reduce broadband quality standards, which FCC Chairman Ajit Pai has now walked back.

"Maintaining this federal standard is essential to ensuring that all Americans are adequately connected to high-speed broadband services. We are glad the FCC shifted from its original plan to reduce broadband quality and instead will stay with the current 25/3 Mbps standard, and does not see mobile as 'a full substitute' for the high-quality broadband all Americans deserve," said Deb Socia, Executive Director of Next Century Cities.

The [#MobileOnly Challenge](#), which asks individuals to spend a day accessing the internet only on their mobile devices, will continue throughout this month, in order to draw attention to the severe limitations of mobile-only service and the persistent broadband affordability and accessibility gaps in the United States.

"Next Century Cities further recognizes the increasing importance of mobile service to technological development and innovation, and commends the FCC for evaluating the progress of mobile deployment," Deb Socia continued. "Despite this, mobile service as it is currently available to consumers does not provide equitable access to the internet when compared to a fixed home connection. Significant limitations of mobile service, including prohibitive cost, unreliable service, data caps and limited accessibility, should disqualify mobile service as a substitute for fixed home broadband."

FCC Commissioner **Mignon Clyburn**, FCC Commissioner **Jessica Rosenworcel**, and both Commissioners' staff teams have all committed to take the #MobileOnly challenge on January 26.

"I am ready and excited to participate in the #MobileOnly challenge," Clyburn stated. "Contrary to those who claim that mobile broadband services provide effective competitive pressure on fixed broadband providers, promoting deployment of mobile broadband services alone is not

sufficient to bridge digital divides in underserved rural and urban communities. By standing together through this movement, we will demonstrate why it is so essential for all Americans to have access to a robust fixed broadband connection.”

“I’m glad that the FCC has backed away from its crazy idea to lower the broadband speed standard,” said FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel. “But it defies logic to conclude that broadband is being reasonably and timely deployed across this country when over 24 million Americans still lack access.”

The public interest leaders of the #MobileOnly Challenge include: Next Century Cities, Public Knowledge, New America’s Open Technology Institute, the National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC), the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, the Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN), the Schools, Health, and Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition, the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, Mobile Citizen, EveryoneOn, and the Communications Workers of America. See more at MobileOnlyChallenge.com.

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Next Century Cities is a non-profit membership organization of over 180 communities, founded to support communities and their elected leaders, including mayors and other officials, as they seek to ensure that all have access to fast, affordable, and reliable internet access. Next Century Cities celebrates broadband successes in communities, demonstrates their value, and helps other cities to realize the full power of truly high-speed, affordable, and accessible broadband. For more information, visit www.nextcenturycities.org.