

For Immediate Release
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Next Century Cities Urges the FCC to Improve Minimum Standards and Consider Both Economic and Physical Accessibility of Broadband

Washington, DC — On **November 22, 2019**, Next Century Cities submitted comments in response to the Federal Communications Commission’s (“FCC” or “Commission”) Notice of Inquiry seeking comments on the state of national broadband deployment. The deployment of broadband to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion is the Commission’s top priority. Progress toward that goal is assessed every year. During this review process, in particular, it is important that the Commission recognize ongoing barriers to broadband access and adoption as well as the importance of reaching out to local leaders for input on connecting largely disconnected populations.

High-speed connectivity has a direct impact on economic, educational, and health outcomes, but people who cannot afford access are shut out of these opportunities. Considering that affordability continues to be one of the biggest barriers to broadband adoption, the Commission should analyze pricing data to determine where service is actually available for reasonable cost.

The FCC should also ensure that the basic standard for broadband service is adequate for Americans to compete in a global digital economy. The current baseline of 25/3 Mbps cannot support the increasing number of devices and applications used in the average household. It should also be noted that due to data caps, unreliable service, and other limitations, mobile broadband access is not a substitute for fixed service.

Francella Ochillo, Executive Director of Next Century Cities, said:

“Next Century Cities appreciates the Commission’s efforts to bring broadband within reach for every American but, collectively, we can do more. Local leaders, like those in Wilson, NC, and Fort Collins, CO, play an integral role in expanding broadband access to communities that remain invisible within the FCC’s data sets. Every household that anxiously awaits broadband connectivity and its promise deserves a careful review of which communities are disconnected and why.”

Find Next Century Cities’ comments to the FCC [here](#). Next Century Cities also submitted [comments](#) in conjunction with Public Knowledge and Common Cause.

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Next Century Cities is a non-profit membership organization of over 200 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.