

Media Contact:

Mark Wigfield, (202) 418-0253
mark.wigfield@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release**2018 BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT REPORT FINDS AGENCY
ACTIONS HAVE RESTORED PROGRESS*****More Work Remains to Connect All Americans to High-Speed Internet***

WASHINGTON, February 2, 2018—The progress of broadband deployment slowed dramatically in the wake of the Federal Communications Commission’s 2015 *Title II Order* that regulated broadband Internet access service as a utility, according to the agency’s 2018 *Broadband Deployment Report*.

However, steps taken last year have restored progress by removing barriers to infrastructure investment, promoting competition, and restoring the longstanding bipartisan light-touch regulatory framework for broadband that had been reversed by the *Title II Order*, the report says.

Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires that the FCC determine annually whether advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed to all Americans “in a reasonable and timely fashion.” The report also assesses the impact of the Commission’s policies on broadband deployment.

Based on the Commission’s actions to accelerate deployment in 2017, the report concludes that the Commission is now encouraging broadband deployment on a reasonable and timely basis. Still, the report finds that far too many Americans lack access to high-speed Internet service, and the FCC must continue its work to encourage deployment of broadband to all Americans, including those in rural areas, on Tribal lands, and in the nation’s schools and libraries.

In making its assessment, the report maintains the current speed standard for fixed service of 25 Mbps downloads/3 Mbps uploads, and analyzes the mobile wireless speeds for which it has the most comprehensive data: minimum advertised speeds collected by the FCC of 5 Mbps/1 Mbps, and actual median speeds collected by Ookla of 10 Mbps/3Mbps. The report also continues to conclude that mobile services are not currently full substitutes for fixed services.

Key findings include:

- From 2012 to 2014, the two years preceding the *Title II Order*, fixed terrestrial broadband Internet access was deployed to 29.9 million people who never had it before, including 1 million people on Tribal lands.
 - But in the following two years, after the *Title II Order* was adopted, new deployments dropped 55 percent, reaching only 13.5 million people, including only 330,000 people on Tribal lands.

- From 2012 to 2014, mobile LTE broadband was newly deployed to 34.2 million people, including 21.5 million rural Americans.
 - But in the following two years, new mobile deployments dropped 83 percent, reaching only 5.8 million more Americans, including only 2.3 million more rural Americans.
- And from 2012 to 2014, the number of Americans without access to both fixed terrestrial broadband and mobile broadband fell by more than half—from 72.1 million to 34.5 million.
 - But the pace was nearly three times slower after the adoption of the 2015 *Title II Order*, with only 13.9 million Americans newly getting access to both over the next two years.
- As of year-end 2016, 92.3% of all Americans have access to fixed terrestrial broadband at speeds of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps, up from 89.4% in 2014 and 81.2% in 2012. Nonetheless, over 24 million Americans still lack fixed terrestrial broadband at speeds of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps.
- Rural and Tribal areas continue to lag behind urban areas in mobile broadband deployment. Although evaluated urban areas saw an increase of 10 Mbps/3 Mbps mobile LTE from 81.9% in 2014 to 90.5 % in 2016, such deployment in evaluated rural and Tribal areas remained flat at about 70% and 64%, respectively. Approximately 14 million rural Americans and 1.2 million Americans living on Tribal lands still lack mobile LTE broadband at speeds of 10 Mbps/3 Mbps.
- Approximately 92% of the population has access to both fixed terrestrial services at 25 Mbps/3 Mbps and mobile LTE at speeds of 5 Mbps/1 Mbps. In rural areas, 68.6% of Americans have access to both services, as opposed to 97.9% of Americans in urban areas. With respect to fixed 25 Mbps/3 Mbps and 10 Mbps/3 Mbps LTE services, 85.3% of all Americans have access to such services, including 61% in evaluated rural areas and 89.8% in evaluated urban areas.
- Approximately 98.1% of the country has access to either fixed terrestrial service at 25 Mbps/3 Mbps or mobile LTE at 10 Mbps/3 Mbps, with that number dropping to 89.7% in rural areas.
- The U.S. ranked 10th out of 28 countries for download speed, 7th out of 29 for fixed broadband price (using the fixed hedonic price index), and 10th out of 29 for mobile broadband price (again, using the fixed hedonic price index).
- 88% of American schools meet the FCC’s short-term connectivity goal of 100 Mbps per 1,000 users. Further, 22% of school districts meet our long-term connectivity goal of 1 Gbps per 1,000 users.

###

Office of Media Relations: (202) 418-0500
ASL Videophone: (844) 432-2275
TTY: (888) 835-5322
Twitter: @FCC
www.fcc.gov/office-media-relations

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).