

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 885

Recognizing the importance of broadband in rural areas throughout the United States and the critical need to invest in broadband expansion in an increasingly connected and digitally dependent world.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 25, 2022

Mr. BAIRD (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BANKS, Mr. BARR, Mr. BOST, Mr. BUDD, Mrs. CAMMACK, Mr. CAREY, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. COLE, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. ELLZEY, Mr. FALLON, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. FERGUSON, Mrs. FISCHBACH, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio, Mr. HARRIS, Mrs. HARTZLER, Ms. HERRELL, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KUSTOFF, Mr. LATURNER, Ms. LETLOW, Mr. MANN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. MELJER, Mrs. MILLER of West Virginia, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. OBERNOLTE, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. STAUBER, Mr. STEUBE, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. TIFFANY, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, and Mr. WITTMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## RESOLUTION

Recognizing the importance of broadband in rural areas throughout the United States and the critical need to invest in broadband expansion in an increasingly connected and digitally dependent world.

Whereas the COVID–19 pandemic led to an increase in remote work and digital communication among all Americans, more so than ever before;

Whereas, as a result of the COVID–19 pandemic, many businesses, schools, government agencies, and organizations devised remote work strategies and invested in digital alternatives to replace in-person, paper-based methods of doing business;

Whereas, since the COVID–19 pandemic has brought challenges to rural community businesses struggling to stay afloat, children accessing virtual school from remote and other digitally underserved locations, and individuals seeking to access health care as rural hospitals have closed, broadband remains critically essential to rural communities;

Whereas technology is transforming the agriculture industry and changing the way farms operate, and such advances are largely dependent on maintaining strong internet connectivity in rural communities;

Whereas innovation on farms and in other rural settings is severely hampered if these locations lack access to robust broadband;

Whereas broadband disparities continue to exist between rural and urban communities, despite the growth and normality that remote work and digital communication have achieved in the past two years;

Whereas consistent internet connectivity is essential for farmers, and a gap currently persists among rural and urban communities with respect to delivering high-speed and reliable broadband to all Americans;

Whereas high-quality internet access is essential for Americans to work, learn, and communicate with one another, and it is therefore important that broadband access in underserved communities be improved and maintained;

Whereas approximately 60 percent of broadband capacity is used by large providers of content streaming services, and rural broadband providers have difficulty in raising prices to cover the costs associated with this ever-growing demand; and

Whereas one of the most vital needs of our country is modern and durable infrastructure, which includes strong and robust broadband: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives finds  
2 that—

3           (1) the Nation’s broadband infrastructure is in  
4       critical need of improvement, particularly as it af-  
5       fects Americans located in rural communities who  
6       continue to struggle to stay connected in an increas-  
7       ingly connected and digitally dependent world;

8           (2) in order to expand rural broadband assist-  
9       ance and to improve the administration and account-  
10      ability of the broadband programs in rural commu-  
11      nities, the Department of Agriculture should utilize  
12      its expertise, experience, and reach to bring these in-  
13      vestments to rural America quickly and responsibly;

14          (3) the Federal Communications Commission  
15      should study the current and projected demands on  
16      rural broadband networks associated with services

1 offered by large providers of content streaming serv-  
2 ices; and

3 (4) the Director of the Office of Science and  
4 Technology Policy should establish a broadband re-  
5 search and development working group to address  
6 national research challenges and opportunities for  
7 improving broadband access and adoption across the  
8 United States.

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