

AMERICA'S LIBRARIES & DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT

Libraries Ensure Access for All to Broadband & Technology

From completing education and securing employment to filing taxes and staying in touch with family, broadband access, adoption and use underpin every aspect of life. Yet more than 30 million U.S. households do not use the internet at home, and nearly twice that have low digital skills. These gaps disproportionately impact low-income families, rural residents, African Americans, Latinos, and people with disabilities.

- America's 120,000 **libraries ensure public access to the internet** and build necessary digital skills.
- Two-thirds of local government leaders say **libraries play an important role in advancing community priorities related to broadband access and digital literacy.**

2018 Requests

- ➔ Invite them to visit a library in your district.
- ➔ Include and support libraries of all kinds (including rural & tribal libraries) in federal broadband initiatives, programs and funding.
- ➔ Leverage libraries as part of broadband adoption and upskilling efforts.
- ➔ Support legislation that bans blocking, throttling, degrading or paid prioritization of internet traffic and includes clear enforcement authority.

Libraries Rely on Fast, Affordable Broadband

High-capacity broadband powers The E's of Libraries® – education, employment, entrepreneurship, empowerment, and engagement. Libraries provide video conferencing for distance education and workforce development, 3D printing and prototyping, and online research and testing resources. Wi-Fi is a high-demand resource that supports patron devices and mobile training labs.

- A majority of public libraries do not meet the FCC broadband goals of 100 Mbps for smaller libraries and 1 Gbps for larger libraries.
- The **federal E-rate program is critical for bringing public libraries up to speed** to meet growing demands for high-bandwidth applications and services.

Libraries Champion an Open Internet

Libraries collect, create and disseminate essential information impartially to the public over the internet. They ensure our users can create and distribute their own digital content and applications. An open internet without "gatekeepers" controlling access to content or services allows the marketplace of ideas to flourish.

- Internet users must be able to **access the legal content of their choosing**, subject to reasonable network management.
- Preserving the open internet is **key to our nation's freedom of speech**, educational achievement, research & innovation, and economic growth.