August 7, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

We write to request funds made available for state, local, territorial and tribal governments in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act be eligible for permanent broadband infrastructure construction and that Congress provides additional time for the buildout of new infrastructure.

A reliable high-speed internet connection is no longer a luxury, but a necessity. The buildout of broadband is especially critical right now to provide support to children learning from home or patients seeking telehealth care services. We must ensure states have the option to build future proof broadband infrastructure.

The CARES Act allocated $150 billion for state and local governments to respond to the public health emergency caused by COVID-19. As part of this effort, states have been able to facilitate temporary internet access programs, enabling households to receive vitally important connectivity.

We also believe it is now necessary to give states flexibility to invest in permanent broadband solutions. This commonsense fix will enable states to more efficiently expand internet connectivity across our country, directly meeting the immediate needs caused by the continued COVID-19 public health emergency.

We therefore request that the upcoming relief bill provides additional time to spend Coronavirus Relief Funds as well as flexibility on what expenses are eligible to allow for more effective permanent broadband infrastructure construction.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to working with you to ensure broadband connectivity across our communities.

Sincerely,

Robert Aderholt  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress