

# Broadband Mapping Initiative: FAQ

## HOW WILL A BROADBAND MAP HELP CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE?

Like any infrastructure investment, delivering broadband to rural areas requires significant financial capital, including the cost of installing fiber optic cable. Knowing where broadband is (and is not) will help avoid duplicative use of federal funding and overbuilding, so providers are reaching to the truly unserved.

## WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE FCC'S CURRENT DATA?

The FCC collects some deployment data from broadband providers by census block via Form 477, which marks census blocks as "served" or "unserved" based on available service at a single location within that census block. This can lead to overstatements in the level of broadband availability, especially in rural areas where census blocks are large.

## WHAT COMPANIES AND ASSOCIATIONS ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE BROADBAND MAPPING INITIATIVE?

In addition to USTelecom, the consortium includes providers and organizations of different sizes, locations and technology types. Among the participants: AT&T, CenturyLink, Consolidated, Frontier, ITTA – The Voice of America's Broadband Providers, RiverStreet, TDS, USTelecom – The Broadband Association, Verizon, Windstream, and the Wireless Internet Service Providers Association (WISPA).

## WHAT STATES ARE INCLUDED IN THE BROADBAND MAPPING INITIATIVE PILOT PROGRAM?

Missouri and Virginia. These states have a mix of rural and urban areas. There is also a wide range of fixed service providers utilizing different types of technology.

## SHOULD CUSTOMERS BE CONCERNED ABOUT PRIVACY?

No. All data provided by carriers will be confidential and will not have any personal consumer information attached.

## WILL THIS INITIATIVE REPLACE THE FCC FORM 477?

After the map is created providers will be able to report their deployment data against the comprehensive map, changing FCC Form 477 from its current form.

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO CREATE A NEW BROADBAND MAP?

The pilot will take 4-6 months. If adopted for use across the nation the comprehensive map will take 18 months to 2 years to develop.

## WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The consortium of broadband providers will undertake the pilot as a proof of concept and report results to the FCC. If successful, the consortium will advocate the FCC adopt this approach across the nation.