

“On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing the United States’ information and communications industry, we urge you to support S. Amdt. 2024 to the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act (H.R. 3935), offered by Senators Luján, Daines, Vance, Welch, Rosen, and Wicker, to fully fund the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Reimbursement Program (Rip & Replace Program) and extend funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This amendment will provide full and immediate funding for the Rip & Replace Program’s current \$3.08 billion shortfall as well as \$6 billion to extend the ACP, which would be fully offset by future spectrum auction proceeds. Fully and immediately funding the removal, destruction, and replacement of untrusted network equipment via the Rip & Replace Program and sustaining the ACP are both critical for supporting and maintaining connectivity across the country, especially in rural areas and low-income communities.”

Excerpt from letter undersigned by the following organizations:

Competitive Carriers Association

CTIA

INCOMPAS

NATE: The Communications Infrastructure Contractors Association

NCTA – The Internet & Television Association

NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association

Rural Wireless Association

Telecommunications Industry Association

USTelecom – The Broadband Association

Wireless Infrastructure Association

WISPA – Broadband Without Boundaries

WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband

“In modern society, broadband is every bit as essential as food, water, electric, and housing. Without it, families will struggle to access school, work, healthcare, government benefits, the news, or even a social life. There simply isn’t time to wait – without immediate action, more than 23 million households could find themselves disconnected from the internet in just weeks. The ACLU is grateful for the efforts of the bipartisan group of Senators who are pushing to ensure American households stay connected.”

Jenna Leventoff, Senior Policy Counsel, ACLU

“The Affordable Connectivity Program is essential for millions of families across the country. We wholeheartedly support this impactful bipartisan amendment and thank Senators Lujan, Vance, Welch, Wicker, Daines, and Rosen for their steadfast commitment to funding this critical program.”

Chip Pickering, CEO, Incompas

“UCC Media Justice congratulates Senators Luján, Daines, Welch, Vance, Rosen and Wicker on their proposed amendment to extend funding for the critically important Affordable Connectivity Program through the end of 2024. If this amendment becomes law, the 23 million low-income families relying on the ACP will have their trust in the program vindicated. This critical bridge funding will pave the way for permanent ACP funding which would mean Congress’ \$42 billion investment in broadband deployment will go farther and be more likely to achieve its goals. The

bi-partisan proposal wisely relies on the auction of valuable spectrum by the Federal Communications Commission to support affordable access to high-speed internet--an equitable approach to digital inclusion long supported by the civil rights community.”

Cheryl A. Leanza, Policy advisor for the United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry

“OTI is grateful for the efforts of the bipartisan group of Senators who are pushing to ensure American households stay connected. Preserving the ACP will help the millions of low-income American households who without the program would risk being unable to pay their internet bills. The internet is essential to American life, and as we face persistent fears of inflation, the uncertainty of AI’s impact on our workforce, and continuously rising levels of disinformation and polarization, we should not leave Americans behind.”

Lilian Coral, Head of OTI and Vice President for Technology and Democracy programs at New America

“We at Connected Nation fully support this bipartisan amendment to preserve the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Losing this benefit would impact the daily lives of the most vulnerable among us—the 23.3 million people who rely on internet access for their jobs, healthcare, education, and so much more. Internet access isn’t just a luxury; it’s the lifeblood of our society. We ask Congress to preserve this benefit for those who have come to rely upon it.”

Tom Ferree, Chairman & CEO of Connected Nation

“EducationSuperHighway thanks the bipartisan group of Senators for their work to preserve the Affordable Connectivity Program, which has helped more than 23 million households get online and stay connected to the digital economy, education, healthcare, the social safety net, and critical government services. This amendment provides critical bridge funding to support the millions of Americans who are unable to access vital online resources without affordable home broadband. We look forward to working with Congress to create a permanent broadband benefit that closes the broadband affordability gap, which accounts for two-thirds of our nation's digital divide.”

Adeyinka Ogunlegan, Vice President, Government Affairs and Policy, EducationSuperHighway

“The Affordable Connectivity Program has helped 23 million households stay connected to education, work, health care and opportunity. The National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients, urges the passage of this bi-partisan amendment to the FAA to ensure continuation of this essential program.”

Olivia Wein, Senior Attorney, National Consumer Law Center

“Fully funding the Rip and Replace Program is critical to securing our nation’s networks , including those serving rural areas, military bases, airports, and other areas of strategic importance,” said Tim Donovan, CCA’s President and CEO. “Absent full funding, millions of Americans face complete loss of connectivity and jeopardized access to emergency services. Additionally, the ACP helps bridge the digital divide, benefiting 23 million households, including seniors and veterans, many in the same areas affected by the potential loss of service due to the Rip and Replace shortfall. Addressing both of these issues immediately is critical for

supporting and maintaining connectivity across the country, especially in rural areas and low-income communities.”

Tim Donovan, CCA's President and CEO

“The Affordable Connectivity Program is America’s promise that opportunity will remain available, no matter a household’s financial circumstance. This amendment is a \$6 billion bipartisan commitment to keep that promise. The Benton Institute for Broadband & Society urges its swift passage so that 23 million households do not experience disruptions in their essential connectivity.”

Drew Garner, Director of Policy Engagement, Benton Institute for Broadband & Society

“Common Sense Media appreciates the steadfast support of this bipartisan group of Senators to ensure the continuation of the Affordable Connectivity Program. More than 23 million households rely on ACP to learn, work, and access healthcare. This amendment will ensure that our students will have consistent access to the internet at home as they finish their end of term projects and study for finals.”

Amina Fazlullah, Head of Tech Policy Advocacy, Common Sense Media

“The National Digital Inclusion Alliance and our community of 1700+ affiliates thanks the bipartisan group of Senators for their work to extend the Affordable Connectivity Program. This act and the ongoing work to find a permanent solution for funding a broadband benefit gets our country a step closer to students doing their homework at home rather than in parking lots, to veterans receiving health support online, and job seekers matching with employers.”

Angela Siefer, Executive Director of the National Digital Inclusion Alliance

“The National Lifeline Association (NaLA) thanks Senators Luján, Welch, Vance, Wicker, Rosen, and Daines for their amendment to the FAA bill that would fund and reform the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Internet access in our digital era is absolutely essential, particularly for seniors, rural communities, and veterans who participate in and depend on the ACP every day to connect to telehealth, education, jobs, and community. This is a critically important amendment and we urge Congress to include this amendment in the must-pass FAA reauthorization.”

David B. Dorwart, Chair, National Lifeline Association (NaLA)

“We applaud the bipartisan amendment in the Senate to extend the ACP. We call on the Senate to move quickly to add this amendment to the FAA Reauthorization legislation to ensure that 23 million families don’t lose Internet access. This amendment demonstrates that Congress can put politics aside. The Senate should move quickly so this extremely popular program can continue. By doing so, Congress would give themselves and the FCC time to start the process of reforming the Universal Service Fund so it can provide a permanent funding mechanism for low-income families to get and stay connected.”

Gigi Sohn, Spokesperson for the Affordable Broadband Campaign

“Millions of low-income Americans are at risk of losing internet access as the Affordable Connectivity Program runs out of funding. As we argued at our rally just last week, broadband is an essential communications network for all. The ACP is critical for providing access to broadband and the education, healthcare, and economic opportunities that it provides. Our ultimate goal then and now remains to save the program so we do not disrupt service for any enrollees – the families who need the ACP most. We support this compromise, bipartisan amendment for its ability to bridge the funding gap while Congress continues working on a long-term solution. Congress must pass this amendment immediately. After that vote, the work is not done until we have a sustainable long-term fund for broadband affordability and other solutions to the digital divide.”

Chris Lewis, President and CEO of Public Knowledge

“I am very pleased to see this bipartisan amendment submitted to the FAA Reauthorization Act. The amendment would provide much needed funding to ensure that American families and veterans stay connected, our networks remain safe and secure from foreign adversaries, and we continue to use every usable spectrum band to fuel our wireless networks. These measures are all necessary to promote the U.S.’s competitiveness and close the digital divide for good.”

Joel Thayer, President of the Digital Progress Institute

“Extending the Affordable Connectivity Program is critical to connecting every American to high-speed, affordable internet. It is currently the best tool we have to bridge the digital divide. Pew applauds Congress’ collaboration and encourages lawmakers to support this bipartisan amendment. With millions of people lacking access to a service that has become essential for quality of life and economic well-being, the time to act is now.”

Kathryn de Wit | project director, The Pew Charitable Trusts’ broadband access initiative

“CWA members strongly support the continuation of the Affordable Connectivity Program which enables critical internet access for millions of American families and supports good jobs in our communities. We are encouraged that a bipartisan group of Senators is working to prevent the ACP from completely shutting down and on a permanent funding solution.”

Shane Larson, Communications Workers of America Senior Director for Government Affairs and Policy

“The SHLB Coalition strongly supports the Luján/Vance amendment to preserve funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The Senate should move quickly so this extremely popular program can continue. Broadband access is essential for education, healthcare, and economic opportunity. The ACP plays a crucial role in bridging the digital divide and ensuring that all Americans have a fair shot at success.”

John Windhausen, Executive Director at SHLB

“The R Street Institute is proud to support this important proposal to extend both Rip and Replace and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) with an appropriate pay-for. This proposal makes meaningful reforms to target customers most in need and streamline eligibility requirements, which R Street has long supported achieving in a revenue-neutral way. While this

will only temporarily extend the ACP, R Street hopes the efforts of the Universal Service Fund (USF) working group continues to find a solution and permanent home for this program within USF.”

Jonathan Cannon, Policy Counsel Technology & Innovation at the R Street Institute

“The Center for Civil Rights and Technology commends the amendment from Senators Luján, Daines, Welch, Vance, Rosen, and Wicker that provides \$6 billion in funding for the FCC’s Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). Lack of high-speed internet access among low-income people, communities of color, and other marginalized communities is concerning, especially at a time when millions need the internet to further their education, earn a living, and access essential goods and services. The strength and continuation of the ACP is essential to our mission to ensure digital equity. With the number of days ticking down for ACP solvency, the Center believes this is the only viable path forward to ensuring more than 23 million families are not disconnected. The Center also urges lawmakers to secure permanent funding for this critical program.”

Koustubh “K.J.” Bagchi, Vice President of the Center for Civil Rights and Technology

“WIA is proud to join the collective support for S. Amdt. 2024 to the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act (H.R. 3935). This critical bipartisan amendment, offered by Senators Luján, Daines, Vance, Welch, Rosen, and Wicker, seeks to address the urgent need for full funding of the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Reimbursement Program, known as the Rip & Replace Program, which currently faces a significant shortfall of \$3.08 billion. In addition, the amendment extends funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) by allocating \$6 billion, ensuring that crucial connectivity services remain accessible to underserved communities across the United States.

These measures are essential to safeguarding our nation's communications infrastructure while promoting digital equity and inclusion. The Rip & Replace Program will enhance the security and resilience of our telecommunications networks, while the extension of ACP funding will enable millions of Americans to stay connected. WIA stands with our industry partners in urging support for this important amendment to bolster our communications networks and enhance connectivity for everyone.”

Wireless Industry Association