CERAGON

AT A CROSSROADS

TAKE THE FAST TRACK TO CROSSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

2.7B people worldwide and 1 in 5 U.S. households remain offline. From broadband availability and adoption to equity and affordability, we must remove these roadblocks to digital equity and get all rural areas connected to high-speed broadband, and quickly.

The digital divide still very much exists, and the many funding programs launched worldwide will prove essential to closing the gaps. But we must fully understand the funding guidelines to have the best shot at receiving a grant.

WHAT ARE THE **ROADBLOCKS** TO CROSSING THE **DIGITAL DIVIDE?**

ROADBLOCK 1 AVAILABILITY & ACCESS GAP

Native American
Only **67%** have broadband, most with less than "minimally acceptable" speeds.

Global Gender
62% male vs. **57%** female have broadband access.

U.S. Racial & Ethnicity
71% Black, **65%** Hispanic vs. **80%** of White have broadband.

People with Disabilities
78% vs. **91%** without disabilities have Internet.

Access
4% of offline U.S. households cite lack of availability in their area.

ROADBLOCK 2 AFFORDABILITY

Affordability
18% of offline U.S. households cited affordability as the reason.

World Poverty
96% of the **2.9B** people who have NEVER accessed the internet live in developing countries.

High Costs
50% of U.S. tribal land residents subscribe to the poor connectivity available to them.

ROADBLOCK 3 DIGITAL PROFICIENCY

Lack of Digital Skills
1 in **3** American workers lack basic digital skills necessary.

No Need or Interest
58% of offline U.S. households cited no need or interest.

Age
41% of Medicare beneficiaries lack access.

TAKING A DETOUR

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF BEING ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS?

DETOURS

Telemedicine is Inaccessible

At the Boston Medical Health System (a safety net hospital),
21% Black/African American, **20%** Hispanic/Latinx, and
22% White patients reported lacking access to a connected device.

DETOURS

Employability Declines

- **91%** of people is the UK say you can't get a job if you don't have the internet, the devices needed, or the skills to use them.
- **70%** of employed Americans state that they cannot do their job without the internet at home.

DETOURS

Education Suffers

Globally, **67%** or **1.3B** school-aged children remain unconnected at home.

- Nearly **17M** U.S. school-aged children lack internet at home.
- Nearly **1** in **5** American teens are often or sometimes unable to complete homework due to lack of reliable internet in the home.
- **35%** of low-income households with school-aged children do not have internet vs. **6%** of such households earning **$75K** or more.

FIXED WIRELESS PROVIDERS:

PRESSING THROUGH THE NTIA'S FIBER-FIRST TUNNEL VISION

With so much on the line, many wireless service providers are getting stuck at the gate, not knowing how to even start the process of applying for funding.

Here are the facts, and why so many have gone off the rails:

- **$42B** at stake through the **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment** funding program (BEAD).
- Rules state a fiber-first preference for BEAD funding.
- Fiber, cable, DSL, & terrestrial fixed wireless using licensed spectrum - eligible for BEAD funding, with caveats.
- Unlicensed fixed wireless excluded from the definition of "reliable broadband."
- State must set an **Extremely High-Cost Per Location Threshold** (EHCT) – must accept any fiber proposal with a total cost that falls below the threshold.

COSTS OF DEPLOYMENT:

- All fiber – up to **$100K** per household.
- FWA – approx. **$1.8K** per household.

HOW TO GET **BACK ON TRACK**

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE WIRELESS INDUSTRY GETS GOING, AND WE'VE GOT SOME MILEAGE TO COVER TO REACH OUR DESTINATION – **CONNECTING THE UNCONNECTED.**

Here are some tips for how to make a difference and get your proposals going **full steam ahead.**

DEVELOP

Develop partnerships, consortiums and/or community anchor institutions.

EDUCATE

Educate yourself and your community.

GET INVOLVED LOCALLY

Get involved with cities, municipalities, tribes, and community anchor institutions.

PLAN

Make sure you have a sound connectivity plan. Know the technologies, the costs, and the subscribers covered with your network design.

JOIN INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

- Rural Wireless Association
- Wireless Infrastructure Association
- WISPA
- CTIA
- WIA
- CCA

ADVOCATE

Advocate at the state level for setting the Extremely High-Cost Per Location Threshold (EHTH) low enough to allow for fixed wireless to compete for funding.

BROADBAND FIXED WIRELESS

CONTACT US TO HELP YOU **GET ON TRACK!**

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Statistics obtained from multiple sources. References available upon request.