

Advocacy Talking Points

Your individual or organizational story is the most impactful evidence we have for the ACP being successful. Your message to lawmakers should focus on what the ACP meant to you (if you were enrolled) or what your organization accomplished (including any events, enrollment initiatives, outreach, etc). **Feel free to use these talking points to supplement your personal message.**

BACKGROUND

- The ACP was part of the bipartisan infrastructure package passed in 2021.
- The ACP received an initial funding of \$14.2B.
- The ACP provided \$30 or \$75 monthly subsidies to make broadband more affordable.
- The ACP also allowed for a one-time device subsidy of \$100 with participating providers.

NATIONWIDE IMPACT

- 23.3 million households relied on the Affordable Connectivity Program to get internet service and stay online.
- Thousands of organizations, including governments, community institutions, non-profits, and internet service providers, participated in outreach and enrollment.
- Access to home internet increases the annual income of under-resourced households by \$2,200.¹
- The ACP has wide-ranging bipartisan support among voters, with 95% of Democrats and 64% of Republicans supporting the program.
- Home internet enables families to access online education, remote work, job training, telehealth, civic engagement opportunities, and critical government services.

IMPACT OF ACP ENDING

- In June, over 23 million American households faced a substantial and often unaffordable increase in their monthly internet bill.
- Affordability is the number one reason why households are not connected to the internet.² While the ACP helped overcome this barrier, the lapse of the program could lead households into financial hardship.
- Families will be forced to choose between internet or other bills, and could lead to the first year in history when fewer households are connected to the internet than the year before.

1 Zuo, George W. 2021. "[Wired and Hired: Employment Effects of Subsidized Broadband Internet for Low-Income Americans](#)." American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, 13 (3): 447-82.

2 https://www.educationsuperhighway.org/wp-content/uploads/No-Home-Left-Offline_Accelerating-ACP-Adoption_2022.pdf

- Consumers' trust in government assistance is becoming eroded; in order to achieve universal connectivity in the future, we need to ensure households trust that once they become connected to broadband, they can stay connected without any unexpected or unaffordable increases.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

- Congress should prioritize passing additional bridge funding for the ACP to extend the life of the program while negotiating and passing a permanent solution for broadband affordability.
- As Congress contemplates Universal Service Fund reforms, it should include a robust broadband affordability program to ensure that households can afford to connect to broadband.
- Policymakers should focus on the most vulnerable households, including those that are currently unconnected due to affordability issues.
- A narrowly tailored, fiscally responsible, and paid-for broadband benefit is crucial to closing the digital divide.