

Communications and Information Technology Alert

Akin Gump
STRAUSS HAUER & FELD LLP

Congress Appropriates \$7 Billion to Fund Broadband Initiatives

December 23, 2020

On December 21, 2020, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, comprised of a \$1.4 trillion omnibus spending package to fund the U.S. government in Fiscal Year 2021 and a \$900 billion coronavirus relief package. The Act includes \$7 billion in appropriations to fund broadband initiatives.

These initiatives include:

- \$3.2 billion for an emergency broadband benefit program to help low-income households connect, or remain connected, to broadband service.
- \$1.9 billion to fund the removal and replacement of communications equipment designated as unsecure from U.S. communications networks.
- \$1 billion for a dedicated Tribal broadband connectivity grant program.
- \$300 million to fund a broadband grant program to facilitate broadband infrastructure deployment in unserved areas.
- \$285 million to fund a newly created Office of Minority Broadband Initiatives at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to support historically black colleges and universities, Tribal colleges and universities and minority-serving education institutions for purposes of expanding broadband availability at the schools and in the surrounding community.
- \$250 in new funding for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) COVID-19 Telehealth Program.
- \$65 million to fund the FCC's development of more accurate broadband availability maps.

A more detailed summary of the broadband funding and other broadband-related provisions of the Act is available [here](#).

akingump.com

Contact Information

If you have any questions concerning this alert, please contact:

Jennifer L. Richter

Partner

jrichter@akingump.com

Washington, D.C.

+1 202.887.4524

Galen A. Roehl

Senior Policy Advisor

groehl@akingump.com

Washington, D.C.

+1 202.887.4224

Steven A. Rowings

Counsel

srowings@akingump.com

Washington, D.C.

+1 202.887.4412