

PRESS RELEASE

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National Non-profit Unveils Comprehensive Action Plan to Ease New Mexico's Digital Divide with Free Apartment Wi-Fi Programs

Santa Fe, NM- EducationSuperHighway, the national non-profit organization dedicated to closing the broadband affordability gap, has announced a groundbreaking report aimed at helping states, including New Mexico, leverage federal broadband funding to launch Free Apartment Wi-Fi programs. These innovative programs are designed to bridge the digital divide concentrated in affordable apartment buildings, benefiting millions of unconnected individuals without home broadband access.

The newly released report provides a strategic roadmap for states to deploy Free Apartment Wi-Fi programs to approximately 85,000 apartment buildings nationwide, effectively connecting 6.5 million unconnected people in 4 million households to reliable high-speed home internet. With the recent Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which allocates \$45 billion in broadband funding, states now have an unprecedented opportunity to address the digital divide. By allocating just 18% of the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funds to deploy hotel-style Wi-Fi networks, New Mexico can close up to 23% of the broadband affordability gap.

Several states, such as Nevada, New York, Maryland, and Massachusetts, have already embraced this transformative solution, deploying Free Apartment Wi-Fi networks using funds from the U.S. Department of the Treasury's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Capital Projects Fund (CPF).

To ensure a successful implementation of these programs, EducationSuperHighway is providing comprehensive support to New Mexico and other states. This includes address-level data for buildings eligible for BEAD-funded Free Apartment Wi-Fi networks and access to their Free Apartment Wi-Fi Dashboard, which offers state- and city-level data on eligible buildings and the populations reached. Additionally, EducationSuperHighway's program experts will assist in budget development, procurement process design, and program implementation, all at no cost to the states.

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About EducationSuperHighway:

EducationSuperHighway is a national non-profit organization dedicated to closing the broadband affordability gap. Since its inception, the organization has been at the forefront of digital equity initiatives, working to ensure that all Americans have access to reliable high-speed internet, regardless of their income level. With the recent release of their comprehensive report, EducationSuperHighway continues its mission to connect millions of unconnected people and bridge the digital divide across the nation.