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Office of Broadband Access & Expansion

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State urges release of $293 million in broadband funds

ALBUQUERQUE – The New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) is calling on the federal government to release $293 million in remaining funds from the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program to support broadband connectivity across the state.

The federal government had allocated $675 million in BEAD funding for New Mexico in 2023. After the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) approved New Mexico's $382 million broadband infrastructure BEAD proposal -- which will connect more than 42,500 unserved and underserved locations in 32 of 33 counties -- $293 million remained

In 2025, the new federal administration reformed the program, decreasing the infrastructure cost below the original allocation; under the BEAD statute, remaining funds must be directed toward broadband support programs.

The NTIA had planned to release its guidance to all states on how to use the $21 billion in BEAD savings during the week of March 9, but the Administration postponed its decision. OBAE had written a letter to the NTIA on February 17, asking for the release of the remaining $293 million.

“It’s imperative that the NTIA release these funds to ensure New Mexico reaches its goals of broadband deployment, digital opportunity, and workforce development,” said **Jeff Lopez**, OBAE director. “Achieving universal connectivity takes more than infrastructure construction—many support services, programs, and other projects are necessary to ensure all New Mexicans have the broadband resources to succeed.”

Lopez stresses BEAD savings should be considered “programmatic extensions” of the federally approved projects, not money for new programs. He urges NTIA Administrator Arielle Roth to disburse the funding to help support the state’s BEAD infrastructure goals accordingly.

The projects funded by the remaining $293 million will support 31 approved infrastructure projects. These projects will deploy a mix of technologies, including fiber, 5G wireless, and satellite. They will be completed using nine internet service providers and satellite companies, five cooperatives,and three Tribal communities.

Five members of the New Mexico Exchange Carrier Group also received awards, as did several rural electric and telephone cooperatives.

Top priorities for the remaining funds include:

- Strategic fiber infrastructure deployment, including pole replacement and make-ready projects, expansion of 5G and successor wireless technologies, and a state-wide quantum computing and artificial intelligence network, including federal facilities in New Mexico.
- Workforce development programs to adequately train a workforce to support BEAD project implementation and address future repairs and maintenance.
- Streamlining permitting at state, county, and municipal permitting agencies to expedite broadband projects.

Funding would also go toward:

- Connecting community anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, and health clinics.
- Digital opportunity initiatives including digital literacy.
- Data collection and broadband mapping.
- Connecting multi-family residential buildings.
- Any use determined by the NTIA to facilitate the state goals.

The remaining $293 million—a combined $675 million from BEAD—will lead to 100% broadband connectivity in New Mexico, transforming lives and improving access to opportunity across the state

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The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion is dedicated to serving New Mexico with a commitment to make high-speed broadband accessible to all New Mexicans. OBAE’s mission is to expand and improve high-speed internet service with passionate leadership that drives bold, equitable, affordable and inclusive broadband solutions. OBAE seeks results that honor the state’s rich heritage and elevate quality of life for all.

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