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**State broadband office's request for \$70 million to increase  
satellite connections will improve New Mexican lives**  
*Proposed program will expand access to service in rural communities  
beginning in 2025*

**SANTA FE**—Tomorrow, the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) will call on the Legislative Finance Committee to provide \$70 million in nonrecurring funds to help fulfill the agency's mission to expand high-speed internet and expedite infrastructure deployment across the state.

If funded, the request will create a near-term affordable pathway for many New Mexicans to access high-speed internet, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach parts of the state.

As of today, there are approximately 95,000 locations in New Mexico that are in areas eligible for satellite service, yet they meet the definition of "unserved" or "underserved." "Unserved" locations receive 25mbps download and 3mbps upload speeds or less, while "underserved" receive between 25mbps/3mbps and 100mbps download and 20mbps upload.

The \$70 million one-time request would go toward a proposed initiative called *Accelerate Connect NM*, which would subsidize the cost of connecting to satellite high-speed internet service for qualifying unserved or underserved households. *Accelerate Connect NM* will bridge the accessibility gap for tens of thousands of New Mexicans while multi-year broadband infrastructure, such as fiber, is being built out across the state.

“Our funding request reflects the short-term needs for connectivity and affordability, while advancing dozens of projects that will deliver on the long-term needs of the State,” said **Drew Lovelace, Acting Director of OBAE**. “Nobody in New Mexico should lack high-speed internet. *Accelerate Connect NM* will be vital to achieving inclusivity for rural homes and businesses.”

The \$70 million would support the following investments during state fiscal years 2026 and 2027:

- Up to 95,000 household vouchers for necessary hardware.
- Monthly subsidy for low-income households to make their satellite service bill more affordable.

“We must look to the future while working hard to meet connectivity needs today,” said **Lovelace**. “It can take years to build scalable and sustainable high-speed internet in our state with so many challenges and federal requirements. We need long-term funding to properly assess the best ways to make broadband accessible throughout New Mexico.”

OBAE’s current FY ’25 operating budget is \$2,388,700. The agency is asking for an increase of \$650,000 in FY ’26. Most of the budget increase will go to paying the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) for administrative support to align with the growth of OBAE’s staff, programs and projects. OBAE currently manages approximately \$1 billion of state and federal funding and is administratively attached to DoIT.

During the past year, OBAE has awarded counties, communities, tribes, internet service providers and other entities more than \$120 million in state grants to deploy broadband infrastructure across the state.

OBAE is currently working on the grant program to award \$675 million in state awards through the federal Broadband Equity Access and deployment (BEAD) program. That program targets unserved locations with a focus on technologies that meet high standards of speed and reliability.

This past summer OBAE also launched the Statewide Education Network, a broadband system that’s connecting public schools across New Mexico.

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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.*