

FACT SHEET ON DRAFT 2018 BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT REPORT

Recognizing the importance of high-speed broadband Internet access, Congress in 1996 tasked the Federal Communications Commission with “encourag[ing] the deployment on a reasonable and timely basis of advanced telecommunications capability to all Americans.” To ensure the Commission took this obligation seriously, Congress required the Commission to report on its progress each year.

Chairman Pai has circulated a draft 2018 Broadband Deployment Report to his colleagues and below are the key findings and additional information.

Topline Takeaways:

- **The 25/3 speed benchmark is maintained.** The draft report finds that the current speed benchmark of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps remains an appropriate measure by which to assess whether a fixed service provides advanced telecommunications capability.
- **Mobile services are not full substitutes for fixed services—there are salient differences between the two technologies.** Both fixed and mobile services can enable access to information, entertainment, and employment options, but there are salient differences between the two. Beyond the most obvious distinction that mobile services permit user mobility, there are clear variations in consumer preferences and demands for fixed and mobile services.
- **Because fixed services and mobile services are not full substitutes, it is important to evaluate progress in deploying fixed broadband service as well as progress in deploying mobile broadband service.** Any analysis that only looked at the progress in deploying fixed broadband service or only looked at the progress in deploying mobile broadband service would be incomplete. Therefore, the draft report takes a holistic view of the market and examines whether we are both making progress in deploying fixed broadband service and making progress in deploying mobile broadband service.
- **Analyzing broadband deployment *progress* is most consistent with the language of section 706.** The draft report finds that analyzing progress to determine whether deployment is occurring in a reasonable and timely fashion is the approach most consistent with the language of section 706, as this enables the Commission to determine whether advanced telecommunications capability “is being deployed” as the law requires.
- **Since the last report, the FCC has taken many steps to encourage broadband deployment.** Most notably, the Commission has taken concrete actions to reduce regulatory barriers to the deployment of wireline and wireless infrastructure, constituted a Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee to assist in these efforts, reformed the legacy high-cost universal service program to ensure accountability and introduce opportunities for new entrants through reverse auctions, modernized our rules for business data services to facilitate facilities-based competition, authorized new uses of wireless spectrum both terrestrially and in space, and voted to eliminate the heavy-handed regulations contained in the *Title II Order*, returning to the successful light-touch regulatory framework for broadband Internet access.
- **Due to these efforts, the draft report concludes that the FCC is now meeting its statutory mandate to encourage the deployment of broadband on a reasonable and timely basis.** That

positive finding, however, does not undermine our continued commitment to closing the digital divide. Too many Americans remain unable to access high-speed broadband, and we have much work to do if we are going to extend digital opportunity to them.

- **Broadband deployment remains the FCC's top priority.** Our effort to bridge the digital divide and promote the further deployment of advanced telecommunications capability will remain the Commission's top priority as we continue our work to deliver the benefits of broadband to all Americans.