Press Release

How States Can Responsibly Expand Broadband

PAULINA ENCK | OCTOBER 7, 2021

The Senate-passed bipartisan infrastructure legislation provides $65 billion for internet infrastructure, primarily intended for states and localities to expand access and help close the digital divide. In a new Insight, Director of Technology and Innovation Policy Jennifer Huddleston and Olivia Triska argue that state and local policymakers should be sure any funds received are usedto their fullest potential impact, being mindful of policy pitfalls that could fail to achieve the goals of closing the digital divide.

Key points:

- Effectively employing these funds will require that state and local policymakers understand the causes of the digital divide in their communities, focus on expanding connectivity to those most in need, remove barriers to deploying internet infrastructure, and embrace a range of technological solutions.
- Policymakers should resist top-down, government-run solutions such as municipal broadband.
- States should prioritize those that truly lack access before moving on to solutions focused on complicated questions of adoption or seeking improved minimum speed.

Read the analysis