



Press Release

Op-Ed: Beware Beto's Siren Song of Rural Broadband

ALLISON EDWARDS | MARCH 26, 2019

The launch of Beto O'Rourke's presidential campaign brought renewed attention to the idea of expanding broadband Internet into rural regions. Yet rural regions will need much more than just fast Internet access, argues AAF's Director of Technology and Innovation Policy Will Rinehart in a RealClearPolicy op-ed today. They will need access to talent and financing as well.

An excerpt:

The example of rural electrification in the 1930s provides a useful contrast. Rural areas saw a near-immediate economic benefit from electrification, but this benefit came because electricity provided a raw material and the technology to leverage what already existed. In other words, rural businesses only [needed to buy new machines](#) to take advantage of the new electricity.

But broadband functions very differently in an economy. Startups might have broadband, but that access must be matched with talent and financing for the broadband to provide any economic boost.

Read the full op-ed [here](#).