

What others are saying about H.R. 7022 The Rural Broadband Acceleration Act

“This bill is a common sense, bipartisan approach to getting serious action on broadband deployment in America. Red tape and unnecessary delays are the very opposite of what Americans living in the digital divide need at this critical time. Accelerating RDOF existing funds is the right thing to do and the time is now. With respect to the pending FCC auction procedures, this bill incentivizes real solutions to broadband deployment that doesn’t require one penny of new funds. NARUC also strongly supports the separate provision that does provide funds to speed up the creation of maps used to target scarce federal broadband subsidies. Anyone serious about fixing the broadband crisis in this nation should support this wholeheartedly. It’s time to quit throwing good money after bad and actually do something for disconnected Americans. Reps. Clyburn and Upton have created a pathway for immediate action, and I hope Congress will move quickly to get Americans connected sooner rather than later by passing this bill quickly.”

Brandon Presley, Chairman, National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and a Commissioner on the Mississippi Public Service Commission

“For ten years, the electric coops across the country have been asking for an equal shot at federal funding to serve their members with broadband. For ten years, the FCC has been spending public money on minimal broadband service. The Rural Digital Opportunity Fund changes all that. The auction will take place at the end of October with funding next summer. We intend to participate in the RDOF on behalf of scores of electric coops and millions of their members.

“So why not wait for the auction? Because we’ve been waiting for ten years, the nation is suffering, and we’re ready now. The Clyburn/Upton legislation recognizes that those who are prepared to build networks now should have that opportunity now instead of waiting another year for funding.

“Everyone supports rural broadband. Everyone talks about rural broadband. But in my twenty years of building rural broadband networks and ten years of talking to state and federal government officials, I’ve heard a lot of talk and seen very little action. Rural America is hurting. Congressmen Clyburn and Upton are standing up for rural America and I promise rural America will take notice of who stood up for us in our time of need.”

Randy Klint, Founder, Conexon

“Efforts to bridge the digital divide began nearly 25 years ago, yet millions of rural Americans remain sidelined and disconnected simply because of their zip code. That’s unacceptable. More than 150 electric co-ops are answering the call and providing broadband that brings new opportunities for education, business and healthcare. I thank Reps. Clyburn and Upton for their dedication to expanding broadband access throughout the nation.”

Jim Matheson, CEO, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA):

“NTCA has long supported policies that enable the deployment and sustainability of future-proof networks in rural areas, with the most efficient approach being to “build it right” the first time and then scale capacity as needed to meet increasing consumer demand. We greatly appreciate the interest of Congressmen Clyburn and Upton in seeking to promote such outcomes, and we look forward to working with them, other policymakers, and other stakeholders to continue this conversation and ultimately deliver on a shared vision of universal service.”

Shirley Bloomfield, CEO of NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association:

"The bill authored by Reps. Clyburn and Upton is a common sense, bipartisan approach to getting serious action on broadband deployment in America. Red tape and unnecessary delays are the very opposite of what Americans living in the digital divide need at this critical time. Accelerating RDOF existing funds is the right thing to do and the time is now. This bill incentivizes real solutions to broadband deployment and doesn't require one penny of new funds. Anyone serious about fixing the broadband crisis in this nation should support this wholeheartedly. It's time to quit throwing good money after bad and actually do something for disconnected Americans. Reps. Clyburn and Upton have created a pathway for immediate action and I hope Congress will move quickly to get Americans connected sooner rather than later by passing this bill swiftly."

Chad Lowder, CEO of the Tri-County Electric Cooperative

"We have long said that geography should not define a person's scope of opportunity, and at no time has the inequity been more problematic than during this national health pandemic. We have a national model demonstrating that rural electric cooperatives can and have effectively been a conduit to bridge the digital divide. Speeding up implementation of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund by passing the Rural Broadband Acceleration Act will allow many to more quickly respond to the desperate needs of the folks in rural America, ultimately creating relevant and sustainable rural communities."

Bob Hance, President and CEO of the Midwest Energy Cooperative