

**Statement of Representative Anna G. Eshoo (as prepared)**  
**Subcommittee on Communications and Technology**  
**House Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
***Breaking Down Barriers to Broadband Infrastructure Deployment***  
**2123 Rayburn House Office Building**  
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Competition, competition, competition. We've all heard Chairman Wheeler repeat those words and yet three-quarters of U.S. households have access to just one broadband provider capable of offering the speeds needed to unlock everything the Internet has to offer.

This summer I heard from Vince, a constituent in Santa Cruz who told me he pays about \$140 a month for 2 land lines with long distance, and a DSL line that's supposed to be 6 Megabits per second (Mbps). He told me that if he were actually able to get those speeds, the service would be almost usable for running his home business and having a movie-night using Apple TV and Netflix. Unfortunately Vince's story is all too common, not just in my Congressional District but around the country. With competition comes lower prices, faster speeds and better customer service.

Last week, Chairman Walden and 26 other cosponsors joined me in reintroducing the *Broadband Conduit Deployment Act*. 'Dig once' as the legislation is commonly known, would mandate the inclusion of broadband conduit—plastic pipes which house fiber-optic communications cable—during the construction of federally-funded roads when there is a demonstrated need for broadband during the next 15 years. This commonsense, bipartisan solution would expand access to broadband for millions of Americans and save taxpayer dollars.

Today, the Subcommittee is also considering five draft bills intended to improve and streamline government processes that can hinder the deployment of broadband. For example, many broadband providers face challenges in accessing utility poles and other rights-of-way on fair, reasonable and nondiscriminatory terms. One of the draft bills addresses this challenge by expanding the FCC's 'nondiscriminatory access' obligation to include telephone poles located on federal property or owned by the federal government.

We also have an opportunity to identify federal land that could facilitate the deployment of broadband. According to CRS, roughly 28 percent of the 2.27 billion acres of land in the United States is owned by the federal government. One of the draft bills seizes on this opportunity by conducting an inventory of federal land and facilities and identifying where broadband infrastructure could be placed.

If enacted into law, the six bills before the Subcommittee today will collectively make a real difference in bringing broadband into both unserved and underserved communities. I thank my colleagues for their commitment to expanding broadband access and I look forward to the testimony of our expert witnesses.