

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology
Ranking Member Doris Matsui

Hearing on "Oversight of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration"

June 30, 2026

Thank you, Chairman Hudson.

I'm glad we're holding this oversight hearing on NTIA. This agency oversees tens of billions in federal broadband funding. The American people deserve answers about why the Trump Administration's spent the last 18 months delaying broadband buildout and canceling funding for states and local communities — all while pressuring them to give up affordability and consumer protections.

Reliable, affordable high-speed internet is no longer a luxury. It is how our children can learn, how patients access telehealth, how small businesses compete, and how families stay connected. That is why Congress passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and invested \$65 billion to close the digital divide, including more than \$42 billion through the BEAD Program.

Congress made a promise to connect every community with affordable, reliable broadband. Instead of carrying out that promise, the Trump Administration has spent the last 18 months gutting it. NTIA has repeatedly moved the goalposts, missed its own deadlines, and created uncertainty for states, providers, and the communities waiting to get connected.

Today, we see the consequences. Providers are walking away. States are being forced to revisit decisions they already made. Communities that thought help was finally on the way are once again left wondering again when — or if — they'll ever get connected.

California has worked in good faith to meet these shifting demands, but we're still stuck waiting on NTIA's final sign-off before we can get shovels in the ground. From Sacramento to San Joaquin and the El Dorado Hills, families are now waiting well into next year while the Trump Administration keeps changing the rules.

Even more troubling, NTIA is still sitting on more than \$20 billion in BEAD nondeployment funding. Congress provided those funds because closing the digital divide requires more than laying fiber in the ground or launching satellites into space. It also requires making sure people can afford to get online and have the skills and support to use that connection. Yet, months after missing its own deadline, NTIA still has not told states if or how they can use these funds — leaving states in limbo and families behind.

I am equally concerned that in other areas NTIA is also exceeding the authority Congress gave it. Congress never directed NTIA to override state affordability policies, disregard their net neutrality laws, or discourage states from negotiating stronger contract provisions to protect consumers. And Congress certainly never authorized NTIA to override state AI laws.

Yet President Trump is threatening to withhold billions in broadband funding from states he doesn't like if he doesn't like their AI protections. The Administration also illegally cancelled nearly \$3 billion in Digital Equity funds, including \$70 million that was going to help California families. That decision stopped a proposed project that would have helped more than 500,000 digitally disadvantaged Californian households gain affordable broadband access, digital skills training, and the devices they need to participate in today's economy.

Across 50 California counties, including the Sacramento region, seniors, veterans, students, people with disabilities, and low-income families are left behind — because President Trump didn't like a program Congress specifically created to help them.

Today, I'm concerned we'll hear NTIA continue to dodge accountability, offer vague answers, shift blame, and exceed the authority Congress gave it. But the American people deserve clear answers. When will states receive certainty about funding? What legal authority does NTIA believe it has to impose requirements Congress never enacted? And when will states finally be allowed to finish the work Congress directed them to do?

Congress passed a bipartisan law. NTIA's job is to follow it, not rewrite it.

Lastly, we must continue leading the world in spectrum policy, which powers the devices and services Americans depend on to work, learn, and stay safe. That is why the U.S. government must speak with one voice at next year's World Radiocommunication Conference. I urge and encourage NTIA to hold a spectrum summit to ensure the U.S. has a united front with our strategic allies.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.