



TO:

The Honorable Chuck Schumer

Majority Leader, United States Senate

322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson

Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives

U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell

Minority Leader, United States Senate

317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries

Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

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January 25, 2024

We, the African American Mayors Association (AAMA), write you expressing our unwavering support to extend funding for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). ACP has proven to be a critical tool for ending the digital divide and ensuring that all Americans – regardless of their economic status, race, or ethnicity, or whether they live in urban or rural areas – have access to affordable, high-speed internet. Access to high-speed broadband is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. Last week, our membership gathered in Washington, DC to discuss Internet access and its vital role in the sustainability of our communities.

More American families are enrolled in ACP than SNAP benefits. There are nearly 23 million low-income households already benefiting from the ACP to pay for internet service. Millions of people – including people of color, veterans, students, seniors, people with disabilities – are using this subsidy right now to improve the socioeconomic outcomes for them and their families. In light of the ACP's importance, this month a bi-partisan, bi-cameral bill was introduced by U.S. Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.), JD Vance (R-Ohio), Jacky Rosen (D-Nev.), and Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.) and U.S. Representatives Yvette D. Clarke (NY-09) and Brian Fitzpatrick (PA-01) to extend the ACP program. The Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act would provide \$7 billion for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which provides affordable high-speed internet options to qualifying households across the U.S.



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We need Congress to act now to extend the ACP. If Congress does not act, ACP funding will be exhausted by this April, leaving millions of students and families without access to the Internet. The ACP empowers low-income communities. Access to broadband equips low-income families to compete for better paying jobs, take advantage of remote work, and more. It is particularly important for communities of color, who have historically been left behind in the digital revolution. With expanded access to high-speed internet, these communities can better participate in the digital economy. Moreover, the ACP doesn't discriminate. The ACP is available to recipients regardless of their credit status or prior debt with the provider. This access is directly tied to education outcomes. High-speed internet unlocks a wealth of educational resources. Thanks to the ACP, families connected can access online learning tools, virtual libraries, educational software, and other resources that can provide greater opportunities for students in underserved communities.

The time to act is now. We strongly urge Members of Congress to fully renew and extend funding for this program that enhances digital equity in our communities. Representing cities large and small, majority-minority neighborhoods, and urban and rural communities alike, our members stand together to support this legislation's critical need in our communities.

Sincerely,

Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard

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President, AAMA

Mayor Steven L. Reed

Montgomery, AL
1st Vice President, AAMA

Mayor Byron W. Brown

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CC:

U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA)

U.S. Senator Peter Welch (D-VT)

U.S. Senator JD Vance (R-OH)

U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV)

U.S. Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND)

U.S. Representative Yvette D. Clarke (NY-09)

U.S. Representative Brian Fitzpatrick (PA-01)

U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro (CT-03)



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