

PRESERVE THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND

Millions of Americans could lose access to affordable telephone and internet this summer. Congress must act to preserve the Universal Service Fund and keep our communities connected.

★★★★ KEEP
AMERICA
CONNECTED



What's at Stake

The Universal Service Fund (USF) ensures every American — no matter where they live — can access baseline phone and internet. It also allows Americans access to telehealth and education that would not otherwise be possible.

Today, the USF's future is in jeopardy. If Congress fails to act to preserve it:



**132,725
schools**

and libraries lose
broadband funding



**54,367,186
students**

lose connectivity



**7,596,720
consumers**

can't afford phone
and/or Internet



**16,080 rural
healthcare providers**

no longer receive telecommunications
services at urban rates, impacting
vital access to telemedicine



remote and rural
**communities lose
connectivity**

Longstanding Program is the Foundation of U.S. Connectivity

For 30 years, the USF has bridged connectivity gaps where the market alone can't deliver. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) established the USF in 1997 at the direction of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which sought to promote access to phone and internet services at just, reasonable, and affordable rates.

By law, the USF is funded by contributions from telecommunications carriers. The FCC administers the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), a private nonprofit the FCC created, to manage the collection and disbursement of these funds.

Through its four programs, Lifeline, E-Rate, High Cost, and Rural Health Care, the USF:



**Extends reliable broadband access
to the nation's most rural and
remote communities**



**Connects schools and libraries to
high-speed internet, narrowing
the digital divide**



**Helps rural health care providers adopt
telemedicine, bringing healthcare closer
to underserved communities**



**Ensures basic communication services
for income-eligible consumers, fostering
economic and educational opportunity**



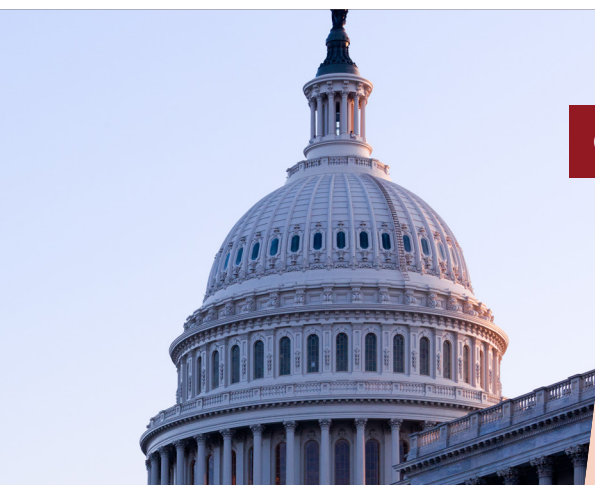
The Future of the USF is at Risk

The future of the USF is in jeopardy because the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals recently held that aspects of the USF's administration are unconstitutional.

This controversial decision breaks with longstanding precedent. It also conflicts with recent decisions from two other U.S. Courts of Appeal, which rejected almost identical challenges to the USF within the past 16 months.

Accordingly, the U.S. Supreme Court is reviewing the Fifth Circuit decision and will issue an opinion this summer.

In the event of a negative Supreme Court decision, the USF could cease to operate in just a matter of weeks — disconnecting rural communities, as well as hospitals, schools, and libraries nationwide, from essential communication services.



CONGRESS CAN KEEP AMERICA CONNECTED

Congress can continue to work on broader reforms to the USF, but it must first address the immediate existential threat facing the USF. Congress must pass legislation that will preserve the USF's operational stability in the event of a negative decision from the U.S. Supreme Court.

About Us

The Keep America Connected Coalition is an advocacy alliance dedicated to ensuring the continuation of universal service funds. We're bringing together telecommunication providers and organizations that represent USF beneficiaries to advocate for a legislative solution that will keep every community in America connected.

