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KEY DEVELOPMENTS

ACA To RUS: e-Connectivity Broadband Pilot Program Has Tremendous Potential But Funds Must Not Be Spent To Overbuild Existing Providers

To encourage private investment in broadband networks and protect taxpayers from the misallocation of federal technology grants and loans, the American Cable Association urged the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to ensure that a broadband pilot program newly authorized by Congress targets funding only to areas where consumers currently lack access to broadband service and where other federal programs are not providing support.



ACA stressed that RUS can stretch the impact of each grant and loan dollar by coordinating with the Federal Communications Commission and the Commerce Department's the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), thus ensuring that key federal agencies are working in tandem to identify areas that need support, which will accelerate the common objective of bringing broadband service to all Americans.

"In enacting the e-Connectivity pilot program, Congress further ensured that all Americans will have access to vital broadband service, but it expressly directed RUS to target support only to areas where there are no existing providers or in effect other federal support mechanisms. RUS now needs to implement the program consistent with these aims. By doing so, it will not only ensure that private investment in broadband networks will not be undermined, but it will spend limited federal funding most efficiently - in those areas where it is most needed." ACA President and CEO Matthew M. Polka said. [Read more.](#)

ACA FILING 9/10 [RUS Comments re Broadband e-Connectivity Pilot Program](#)

ACA Suggests Ways FCC Can Expedite Its Awareness Of False Emergency Alerts



The American Cable Association supports the Federal Communications Commission taking steps to improve its awareness of false emergency alerts, but it cautions the agency not to impose unnecessary reporting burdens on Emergency Alert System (EAS) Participants that do nothing more than pass through an alert sometimes later determined to be false.

"ACA applauds the FCC's efforts to improve the reliability and operational readiness of EAS, including to reduce the threat of false alerts," said ACA President and CEO Matthew M.

Polka. "ACA shares the FCC's concern that false alerts weaken confidence in EAS, undermining its value as an authoritative public warning system. Accordingly, ACA supports the agency's efforts to acquire timely information about false alerts from those sources in the best position to give it."

In July, the FCC adopted the requirement that an EAS Participant notify the FCC within 24 hours of discovering it has transmitted a false alert. The agency sought comment on further reporting, including whether to require EAS Participants to report false alerts "within five minutes of discovery." [Read more.](#)

ACA FILING 9/10 [FCC Comments re Amendment of Part 11 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alerts](#)

ACA To FCC: Federal Policies Are Promoting "Reasonable and Timely" Broadband Deployment

The deployment of broadband to all Americans is occurring in a reasonable and timely fashion, largely fueled by efforts of the Federal Communications Commission and Congress to promote investment and remove regulatory burdens that dampen business confidence, according to the American Cable Association in a Sept. 17 filing with the FCC.



ACA members are responding to this policy environment by investing heavily in new deployments that will allow their customers to enjoy faster speeds and more reliable connections. ACA urged the FCC to continue its work to reduce barriers to deployment, and to ensure that deployment subsidies are targeted effectively to those areas that lack a business case for private investment even once deployment barriers are removed.

"The FCC's decision to restore a light-touch regulatory framework for broadband Internet access service has relieved ACA members from substantial legal risk and uncertainty and enabled funds to be diverted from compliance to capital investment. More recently, the FCC adopted major reforms of its pole attachment rules that should make it easier and less costly for providers to obtain access to critical infrastructure necessary to deploy broadband, including when seeking to expand into new territory," ACA President and CEO Matthew M. Polka said. [Read more.](#)

ACA FILING 9/17 [ACA Comments re Broadband Deployment NOI](#)

ACA To FCC: "Connected Care" Pilot Program Should Leverage Availability Of Local, Facilities-Based Providers



The American Cable Association filed comments in support of the Federal Communications Commission's "connected care" pilot program, which will enable low-income consumers to receive telehealth services beyond the walls of a hospital or doctor's office. ACA offered suggestions for ensuring opportunities exist for local, facilities-based providers to participate in pilot projects and for avoiding government subsidized overbuilding.

"FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr is to be commended for his leadership on the new 'connected care' pilot program," ACA President and CEO Matthew M. Polka said. "The program offers a great opportunity for the FCC to try out different models for meeting an emerging health care need while ensuring scarce Universal Service Fund (USF) dollars are allocated fairly and efficiently."

Through techniques such as remote patient monitoring, the proposed "connected care" pilot program seeks to improve health outcomes while driving down costs. [Read more.](#)

ACA FILING 9/10 [FCC Comments re Promoting Telehealth for Low-Income Consumers](#)

ACA PODCASTS

Cable Talk: Episode 9

In this new [episode](#): ACA President and CEO Matthew M. Polka sits down with Petra Vorwig, Senior Legal & Regulatory Counsel SES, and Dianne VanBeber, Vice President, IR and Corporate Communications Intelsat, to discuss the SES reimbursement program for registering C-Band Earth Stations. Topics include: What the registration process looks like, what SES is offering, what are SES's and Intelsat's interests in encouraging cable operators to register, and how soon you need to register. All of this and more can be found in this edition of Cable Talk!



Additional information:

[ACA Member Advisory](#): SES Launches FCC Form 312 Filing Fee Reimbursement Program.

[Reimbursement Information](#): Follow these rules to be eligible to receive reimbursement from SES.

NEWS HEADLINES

[Buckeye Broadband Officer Named Interim Executive Vice President \(Toledo Blade, 9/13\)](#)

Geoff Shook, chief operating officer for Toledo-based Buckeye Broadband, has been named interim executive vice president and general manager of the company. He replaces former president Jeff Abbas, who left to pursue other opportunities. The change was announced by Allan Block, chairman of Block Communications Inc., which owns Buckeye Broadband, The Blade, and Telesystem.

[Verizon Sets October Launch Of '5G Home' Broadband In L.A. \(Variety, 9/11\)](#)

Verizon is the first mobile carrier to offer home broadband via 5G: The company announced it will start offering wireless home broadband service in Los Angeles, Sacramento, Houston and Indianapolis starting October 1. Existing Verizon wireless customers will be able to get the new service for \$50 per month; consumers without a Verizon wireless plan will have to pay \$70 per month. Verizon expects to provide Internet access with speeds of up to 1 Gbps at peak times and average download speeds of 300 Mbps.

[Vast Broadband Bringing 1 Gig To The Black Hills \(Release, 9/10\)](#)

Vast Broadband, one of the region's leading broadband Internet providers, announced it is launching speeds up to 1 gigabit per second (Gbps) in the Black Hills in November. Vast residential and business services are available to almost 60,000 residential and business customers in the Black Hills Region. The expansion of the Vast 1 Gig Internet footprint into the region will be the first for Vast in South Dakota. As a region with an emerging technology presence, the expansion solidifies Vast's continued investment in the area's schools, businesses and residents, to facilitate growth and innovation.

[Netflix Refusing To Pay Cable Fees To Local Missouri Towns \(Hollywood Reporter, 9/13\)](#)

"Netflix is not a video service provider because it does not provide video service." This powerful argument comes from a memorandum submitted in Missouri federal court on Sept. 13 by Netflix, which along with Hulu faces a lawsuit from the City of Creve Coeur, Mo. Creve Coeur seeks a declaratory judgment that Netflix and Hulu are engaged in the business of providing video service within the meaning of a 2007 law and should have to pay cable-like franchise fees.

[FCC Chair Visits Vermont To Tout Success Of Rural Broadband \(WCAX, 9/12\)](#)

SPRINGFIELD, Vt. - A little rain did not stop FCC Ajit Pai from climbing into a bucket loader and being hoisted to the top of a wireless hotspot in Springfield, Vermont. "It is critical for starting a business, educating kids, telemedicine, precision agriculture," Pai said. Pai is touring the country to see firsthand how broadband Internet service is affecting rural areas.

[Dish Adds DVR Feature To AirTV \(Multichannel News, 9/12\)](#)

Looking to build a full, robust pay TV feature set into its Sling TV streaming ecosystem, Dish Network announced that it's adding DVR functionality to its AirTV device. The upgrade is free to AirTV users but it will require them to purchase an external USB hard drive up to 2 terabytes in size.

[Discovery, Hulu, Unveil Programming Partnership \(Multichannel News, 9/12\)](#)

Discovery has inked a partnership agreement with Hulu that will bring live and on-demand content from five of its networks to the streaming video services. This deal, coupled with the three Discovery channels already providing content to the streaming service - HGTV, Food Network and Travel Channel - makes Discovery Hulu's largest content provider outside of its equity owners.

[Newsmax Strikes Comcast Carriage Deal \(Multichannel News, 9/17\)](#)

Newsmax TV has struck a carriage deal with Comcast, the nation's largest cable operator. Newsmax TV is a conservative 24-hour news channel currently available in 50 million homes via cable and satellite. The agreement is for carriage in Comcast's XFINITY "digital starter" package on the X1 platform, which will add another 10 million homes at the outset. Newsmax is looking to be in 80 million homes by the end of 2019.

ACACTION BRIEF TOP THREE

Most-Clicked Links From Sept. 5 ACAction Brief

1. [ACA Applauds FCC On Regulatory Fee Parity Between Cable, DBS Giants](#)
2. [Amazon Is Planning Live TV Recorder, Challenging TiVo](#)
3. [ACA: FCC's First CAF Reverse Auction A Major Win For Broadband Consumers](#)

ABOUT THE AMERICAN CABLE ASSOCIATION

Across this vast country, small and rural markets participate in the digital revolution by receiving video, broadband, and phone services from nearly 800 small and medium-sized independent operators represented by the American Cable Association.

ACA's members – cable, phone, and fiber-to-the-home operators and municipalities – deliver affordable basic and advanced services to nearly 7 million households and businesses. ACA members operate in every state, offering high-definition television, next generation Internet access, and digital phone service.

Access to advanced communications is not a luxury but a critical necessity for consumers and companies, schools and hospitals. America's economic prosperity in smaller markets and rural areas depends on the growth and success of ACA members, who believe a connected nation, is a united nation.

The ACA asks lawmakers and regulators to ensure fair treatment so that small and medium-sized independent operators may continue to supply affordable video, broadband, and phone services to Main Street America. Through active participation in the policymaking process, ACA members and leaders advocate for the interests of their customers, their companies, and their communities to help ensure the continued viability of their way of life in hometown America.

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