

July 11, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Hakeem Jefferies
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate

RE: A Sustainable Funding Solution to the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

Dear Speaker McCarthy, Majority Leader Scalise, Minority Leader Jefferies, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

HTTP, the Hispanic Technology and Telecommunications Partnership, representing the most influential national Hispanic organizations in the U.S., along urges that Congress find a sustainable funding solution for the Affordable Connectivity Program (“ACP”).

Born out of bipartisan support and signed into law by President Donald Trump as the Emergency Broadband Benefit and continued as the ACP under President Joe Biden, the program is valued by a vast range of stakeholders. Defunding this necessary program will result in millions of Latino families, students, and workers to lose their internet connection and result in loss of day-to-day stability and risk losing out on future economic opportunities.

Studies buttressed by personal stories show that Latinos rely on the internet for their educational and economic advancement. Thus far, the ACP benefit has resulted in increased employment rates and earnings, creating more than \$2,200 in economic benefit for low-income households.¹ The ACP bolsters the U.S. economy by creating more opportunities for Latino participation in the digital ecosystem. Allowing for expiration of the ACP would drastically widen the digital divide while catapulting already excluded communities backwards. HTTP urges that Congress renew and allocate sustainable funding for this necessary program.

As a coalition of national organizations serving millions of Latinos we know how imperative it is for our community to have affordable and accessible internet. Historically marginalized communities have lacked internet access stymying their future education, employment, and access to quality health care.²

¹ Blair Levin, Washington may be about to take a giant step backward in closing the digital divide. Brookings (2023).

² Nicol Turner Lee, et al., Why the federal government needs to step up efforts to close the rural broadband divide. Brookings (2022).

The time to act is now. HTTP stands side by side with a plethora of national civil rights organizations, industry, and academics calling for continued ACP funding.

Every state along with local partners are continuing to work on building out necessary infrastructure and doing important outreach for the program. It is imperative to allow the ACP to thrive alongside those infrastructure and outreach efforts. The discounted internet program is uplifting marginalized communities while closing the digital divide and we urge Congress to act quickly.

HTTP welcomes the opportunity to discuss the importance of this program at the request of Congress and work with leaders in finding a sustainable solution.

Sincerely,

HTTP	Hispanic Federation
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	MANA
Hispanic Heritage Foundation	SER
National Conference of Puerto Rican Women	The Latino Coalition
National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts (NHFA)	Aspen Institute Latinos & Society
National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC)	Prosperity Now
National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)	LULAC
Society of Hispanic Engineers (SHPE)	ALLVanza

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About Hispanic Technology & Telecommunications Partnership

The Hispanic Technology and Telecommunications Partnership (HTTP) is the leading national Latino voice on telecommunications and technology policy. We are a bipartisan partnership of national Latino organizations working to ensure that the full array of technological and telecommunications advancements are available to all Latinos in the United States. HTTP members are nonprofit organizations that support the social, political, and economic advancement of over 50 million Americans of Hispanic/Latino descent by facilitating access to high quality education, economic opportunity and effective health care through the use of technology tools and resources.