

**Questions for the Record - Majority**  
**Alan B. Davidson**  
**National Telecommunications and Information Administration**

**Senator Amy Klobuchar**

***Next Generation 9-1-1.*** The Senate reconciliation bill includes \$500 million for modernizing the nation's 9-1-1 systems and related upgrades.

**Question:** If confirmed, what are your key priorities related to modernizing the 9-1-1 system?

Far too many 911 centers still use legacy technology that risks creating a major gap in our Nation's emergency communications ecosystem. If confirmed, my key priorities for implementing Next Generation 911 (NG911) in Emergency Communications Centers or 911 centers across the Nation will include: ensuring interoperability so that 911 centers can seamlessly share data and transfer calls with each other; supporting technology with robust cybersecurity; providing resiliency for 911 centers; and allowing the public to send multimedia and data to 911 so that public safety can more effectively respond to calls for service.

Unfortunately, my understanding is that the limited funding level in the proposed Next Generation 911 grant program in the current text of the Build Back Better Act is unable to modernize all 911 centers across the United States -- but would be an important starting point including crucial NG911 requirements and definitions.

## **Senator Kyrsten Sinema**

***Tribal Broadband.*** The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (CAA) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) dedicated a combined \$3 billion to the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has the responsibility of establishing a grant program to distribute this funding to tribal governments.

**Question:** If confirmed, how will you ensure tribal governments in Arizona that meet the program's requirements receive funding from the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program in a fair and efficient manner to connect their communities?

Secretary Raimondo, speaking at the National Congress of American Indians' 78th Annual Convention, committed to working with tribal governments to get them the broadband connections needed to participate in the 21st-century economy. I strongly support this goal. While I have much to learn about NTIA's specific plans in this area, I believe that strong communications and consultation are essential to ensuring that tribal governments receive the full benefits of programs such as the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program in a fair and efficient way. If confirmed, I would seek to bolster communications resources designed to engage with tribal communities. I would work to ensure that NTIA is offering needed technical assistance to those communities. And I would look forward to engaging directly with tribal communities to better understand their unique connectivity needs now and in the future. I would welcome the opportunity to learn from and work with your office to continue growing NTIA's efforts in this space.

**Question:** The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has an Office of Native Affairs and Policy, which represents the FCC in government-to-government consultation with sovereign Tribal nations, works with other FCC offices and bureaus to develop and implement policies for assisting Native communities, and ensures that Native concerns and voices are considered in all relevant Commission proceedings and initiatives. Does NTIA have a similar office, and if not, do you believe dedicated resources for tribal consultation would be beneficial?

I am not aware of a specific office at NTIA dedicated to sovereign tribal nations. I believe it is essential to support tribal consultation regarding broadband programs, and dedicated resources can be a beneficial way to do so. I have been told that NTIA has a strong team, with Native American staff, working on the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. If confirmed, I would seek to build on efforts such as this and ensure we are offering dedicated resources as needed to engage well with tribal communities.

***Broadband Coordination.*** With the signing of the IIJA, NTIA will begin administering the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program to provide state and territorial governments grants to develop their broadband infrastructure. The IIJA dedicates over \$42 billion to this program. The CAA also required the NTIA, FCC, and Department of

**Agriculture to develop an interagency agreement regarding the coordination of disbursing funds for broadband deployment, which went into effect in June 2021.**

**Question: Considering the significant investments in the IJA for broadband deployment, how will you work to ensure NTIA coordinates with state governments and other federal agencies to enable more Americans to receive reliable and consistent Internet access?**

Meeting the goal of connecting everyone in America with high-speed, affordable, and reliable Internet will require a “whole of government” approach that includes close coordination among federal, state, and community actors. The IJA gives state governments an enormous role in implementing the BEAD state grant program. I believe that one of the most important things NTIA can do to further the IJA’s goals is to support states in that process. If confirmed, I would make coordination and communication with states a top priority. I would seek to build on NTIA’s well-regarded convenings of state broadband leaders, and ensure that NTIA staff continue to hold regular meetings with state officials to anticipate and address questions. To ensure that states and other stakeholders are equipped to take full advantage of the new funding opportunities, I would seek to have additional dedicated staff to respond to each state's questions and offer technical assistance. Accomplishing the goals of the IJA will require a surge of resources into state technical assistance efforts, and new communications channels and engagement efforts will be needed. NTIA has a good start and, if confirmed, I look forward to building even stronger relationships with states.

I also believe that careful coordination with other federal agencies working on broadband support will be essential if we are to connect all Americans and act as wise stewards of federal resources. The IJA directs NTIA to consult or coordinate with the FCC and other federal agencies on a range of issues. I was also encouraged to see that NTIA, FCC, and USDA signed an MOU in June that documents their commitment to coordinate resources and leverage data from each to appropriately identify areas of need. If confirmed, I will work to implement the MOU rapidly and to engage collaboratively with these agencies to ensure that broadband efforts reflect best practices and deep coordination across the federal government.

***Interference with GPS Systems.* In April 2020, the FCC approved an application by Ligado Networks to deploy a low-power 9.8 decibel watts terrestrial nationwide network across three bands of electromagnetic spectrum. Several agencies, including the Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, and the Federal Aviation Administration, have raised concerns that Ligado’s network could interfere with global positioning system (GPS) instruments. Following the order, NTIA petitioned the FCC to reconsider its order based on irreparable harms to federal government users of GPS.**

**Question: What are your thoughts on this issue?**

I am aware this is an important spectrum management issue. My understanding is that the Biden Administration has continued to support the NTIA petition for reconsideration currently pending with the FCC. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging more closely on this issue, including

being briefed by expert staff as well as stakeholders in government and the private sector who share an interest in resolving this controversy after so many years.

## **Senator Raphael Warnock**

***Connected Device Program.*** Closing the digital divide will take more than just building networks or subsidizing broadband services. As many of us have learned over the past two years, to connect to broadband and take advantage of expanded opportunities, families also need laptops and tablets to get online for work, school, and more. However, about two in five low-income families don't have a laptop or tablet at home. Earlier this year, I introduced the Device Access for Every American Act to provide laptops and tablets to low-income families, so that parents and kids can get connected. This connected device program is currently included in the Build Back Better Act and would be administered at NTIA.

**Question 1:** Do you agree that making investments in closing the digital divide and homework gap for low-income Georgians is critical?

Yes, absolutely. I agree that closing the digital divide and homework gap is critical for low-income Georgians and low-income people across the country. The pandemic has confirmed what we have known for some time: Connectivity is a key to our children's success. Perhaps the most important policy lesson that is incorporated into both the IJA and the Build Back Better Act is that an all-of-the-above approach is essential to closing the digital divide: We must address devices, affordability, and deployment within an overall commitment to digital equity.

**Question 2:** If this program is signed into law, would you commit to expeditiously setting up this program at NTIA?

Yes. Too many Americans lack access to devices they need to utilize the Internet. If this program becomes law, I would work to expeditiously proceed with it at NTIA to address the needs of low-income Georgians—and all low-income Americans.

***Coordination with state and local partners.*** With the expansion of the NTIA's role in broadband deployment, including the administration of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, it is essential that NTIA engages in active communication with state and local partners.

**Question:** Under your leadership, how would NTIA communicate with individual states moving forward?

Meeting the goal of connecting everyone in America with high-speed, affordable, and reliable Internet will require a "whole of government" approach that includes close coordination among federal, state, and community actors. The IJA gives state governments an enormous role in implementing the BEAD state grant program. I believe that one of the most important things NTIA can do to further the goals of IJA is to support states in that process. If confirmed, I would make communication with states a top priority. Fortunately, NTIA has a strong track record of engaging with states on broadband policy. In recent years, the State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN) run by NTIA staff has become a well-regarded convening body for state broadband leaders. If confirmed, I would seek to build on this foundation and ensure that NTIA

staff continue to hold regular meetings with state broadband officials to anticipate and address questions. To ensure that states and other stakeholders are equipped to take full advantage of the new funding opportunities, I would seek to have dedicated staff to respond to state questions and offer technical assistance. Accomplishing the goals of the IIJA will require a surge of resources into state technical assistance efforts, and new communications channels and engagement efforts will be needed. NTIA has a strong starting point and, if confirmed, I look forward to building stronger relationships with states.

**Question: What resources would you devote to reaching out to and informing broadband leaders in specific states and regions on a routine basis?**

Under the framework established by Congress in the IIJA, federal coordination with states is the key to this program's success. If confirmed, I would continue to grow the relationships established through the existing network of state broadband leaders established by NTIA. I would ensure that broadband officials nationwide are fully apprised of the status of our programs, and anything else they need to know in order to take full advantage of the unprecedented opportunity presented by the IIJA. I would ensure that NTIA is offering targeted technical assistance to states and other stakeholders, and would assign personnel to specific states and regions so state officials will have a consistent point of contact and resource at NTIA.