
Title **0008** 10/30/2023

by **Ryan Flickner** in **Digital Equity Public Comment (English)** id. 44550530

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Please provide your first and last name Ryan Flickner

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If you are affiliated with an organization, please provide the organization name Kansas Farm Bureau

If you are affiliated with an organization, please share a brief paragraph about your organization and its work in promoting digital equity Kansas Farm Bureau is a non-profit advocacy organization established in 1919. Our mission is to strengthen agriculture and the lives of Kansans through advocacy, education and service. As a grassroots organization, there is a county Farm Bureau in each of Kansas' 105 counties. In order to be successful and thrive, our members across the state need access to reliable and affordable broadband connectivity -- wired and wireless.

If affiliated with an organization, please provide a link to website <https://www.kfb.org/>

Who is your main point of contact if we have further questions? Please provide their name and the best method to communicate with them if they are not the commentor on this form

Ryan Flickner

Is there any additional background information you would like our office to know?

<https://www.kfb.org/Get-Involved/Connecting-Kansas>

Please rank the Kansas digital equity plan on how it accomplishes the following:

Question 1: Outlines the current state of digital equity in Kansas

Well

Question 2: Outlines a vision for digital equity in Kansas that recognizes the state's unique social and economic circumstances

Well

Question 3: Identifies the barriers to digital equity faced by each of the state's covered populations

Well

Question 4: Establishes an implementation strategy to achieve digital equity

Well

Question 5: Well
Describes how
Kansas will
coordinate and
conduct outreach
amongst digital
equity partners and
stakeholders

Question 6: Well
Describes how
Kansas will
coordinate its use of
DEA funding with any
funds it will receive in
connection with
BEAD or other digital
equity funding

Question 7: Identifies Well
the assets available
to help connect
Kansas' covered
populations

Question 8: If there
are any digital equity
assets that you feel
have not been listed
in the digital equity
plan, please list them
here

Question 9: Please Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets
indicate which Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement
sections of the
Kansas digital equity
plan you are
providing comment
on

Please provide comment on Section 3: Current State of Digital Equity: Barriers and Assets

The Kansas Farm Bureau 2023 policy book includes “we support every home, business and agricultural operation in Kansas having access to high-speed communication infrastructure at a reasonable cost. We support a vibrant high-speed broadband network that delivers telemedicine applications, distance learning applications for K-12, higher education and continuing education, and gives libraries the ability to provide interactive content for rural citizens.”

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), representing more than five million agriculturalists nationwide, including Kansas Farm Bureau members, has 2023 policy support,

- Broadband programs prioritizing resources for rural communities most in need of connectivity
- Requiring companies that win broadband spectrum bids to quickly build out infrastructure or face significant fines for failing to do so. Any fines should be earmarked for broadband infrastructure in underserved rural areas
- Communications services should be available at a reasonable cost to all people
- Multiple sources and increased levels of funding for developing and expanding broadband and cellular network access to rural areas
- Increasing high speed internet access in rural areas through any source, including wireless, by using a combination of tax incentives, grants and/or regulations
- Networks should meet and exceed the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) definition for broadband
- Increased cooperation among internet providers to improve access to broadband in rural areas through coordination/sharing of either current assets or the installation of necessary infrastructure
- Identification of underserved areas in regards to broadband availability and the prioritization of those areas in terms of resource allocation
- Increased focus on improving rural cellular networks

The report states a goal to “better identify the needs and barriers of those populations experiencing gaps in broadband adoption [...]”, KFB recommends a strong focus be place on locations throughout the state where connectivity is substandard. We strongly support the report's objective on both availability (“improve availability of broadband across Kansas”) and affordability (“increase access to and adoption of affordable broadband service”).

Please provide comment on Section 4: Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

Kansas Farm Bureau is pleased to be mentioned as an active participant and advocact for our members under the barriers and assets section of the Current State of Digital Equity chapter and we look forward to continuing to be a “constant and tireless resource on digital equity issues.”

Ryan Flickner on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau (10/30/2023)

By submitting this form for public comment and evidence to support your comment, you are accepting responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted and that it is true and correct to the best of your knowledge. You agree to be contacted by the Kansas Office of Broadband Development, Kansas Department of Commerce should the need arise. Furthermore, by making this submission, you understand that Kansas Department of Commerce and the Office of Broadband Development reserve the right to publicly publish your comment and evidence provided. Falsification of information will result in rejection of future public comment submissions and could result in legal action. Please type your name and today's date in the text box below.
