

## **Written Statement of**

**Alan Davidson**  
**Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information**  
**National Telecommunications and Information Administration**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**

**Before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Subcommittee on Communications and Technology**

**“Connecting America: Oversight of the NTIA”**

**February 16, 2022**

### **Introduction**

Thank you Chairman Doyle, Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Latta, Ranking Member Rodgers, and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to speak with you today.

By law, NTIA serves as the President's advisor on telecommunications and information policy. NTIA's programs and policymaking focus largely on expanding broadband Internet access and adoption in America, expanding the use of spectrum by all users, and ensuring that the Internet remains an engine for continued innovation and economic growth.

We have been given a historic opportunity—thanks to bipartisan support from Congress—to close the digital divide, create good-paying jobs, promote equity, and enhance American competitiveness.

I am pleased to join you now just a little over one month in this new role. I have spent my career devoted to the idea that technology must serve human progress. For 25 years—as a computer scientist, a lawyer, a public interest leader, and an executive—I have sought to build and shape digital technologies that connect people to make their lives better. I am honored and humbled to lead NTIA at this pivotal moment.

NTIA has many responsibilities, but today I will highlight the top priorities for us this year.

Priority number one is closing the digital divide. Gaps in broadband access mean gaps in opportunity: fewer opportunities to learn and work from home, remotely visit doctors, or stay connected with family and friends. Achieving an equitable future means ensuring that homes and businesses have high-quality connections at affordable prices, and the means to use them.

Thanks to the leadership and work of this Subcommittee, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provided \$65 billion to help deliver affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet to every American and help close the digital divide. NTIA was allocated \$48.2 billion of that total.

To achieve these goals, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law created or expanded four programs at NTIA. The \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program will fund infrastructure buildouts needed to connect every American to reliable, high-speed, affordable Internet. The law also provides NTIA with \$2.75 billion for a program to address digital inclusion and equity, and \$1 billion for a program to expand middle mile infrastructure. Our active Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program received an additional \$2 billion to help further our efforts with tribal communities.

In addition to these Bipartisan Infrastructure Law programs, NTIA is working to implement the separate \$1.5 billion in broadband grant funding included as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

NTIA's second priority is ensuring access to spectrum. NTIA serves a critical role in ensuring the most effective and efficient use of this scarce Federal resource across the Federal government. That includes meeting critical Federal mission needs while coordinating with the Federal Communications Commission to support advanced wireless technologies, so we can realize the promise of next generation services and connected devices. As I stated during my confirmation hearing, I am committed to working toward a coordinated, national approach to spectrum use and planning to meet current and future demands.

Finally, NTIA is working to bolster cybersecurity and public safety communications, protect privacy, and advocate for America's vision of free and open communications around the world. We are playing a leading role in the U.S. government's efforts to increase market competitiveness and enhance supplier diversity for secure 5G infrastructure, and working to accelerate the adoption of Open RAN technologies in the United States and around the world. NTIA also is leading efforts to enhance public safety communications and Next Generation 911, and supporting the FirstNet Authority for our nation's first responders.

And we are working to ensure that our global communications systems remain a positive force offering access to information, connection with community, and economic opportunity – including support for the election of Doreen Bogdan-Martin to Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union as a key U.S. government priority.

All of these are ambitious goals. Given technology's growing role in our lives, these priorities are about far more than communications policy. They are about creating new jobs for Americans. They are about public safety and national security. They are about improving equity here at home. They are about competing on the global stage.

This is an exciting and historic moment for NTIA. I look forward to working with this Subcommittee to execute our mission and deliver on these promises to all Americans.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions.