

The Rural Digital Opportunity Fund

With more services becoming available through digital sources, connectivity in rural areas of the country has become a topic of focus for many legislators and government officials. On January 30, 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced the establishment of the [Rural Digital Opportunity Fund](#) which will direct up to \$20.4 billion over ten years to connect unserved rural areas to high-speed broadband networks.

Efforts will focus on a two-phase roll-out approach with Phase I targeting areas identified as wholly unserved with fixed broadband access. Allocating \$16 billion for this phase, it is expected that efforts will begin later this year to connect an estimated six million rural homes and businesses. Phase II of the program will allocate \$4.4 billion with a focus on increasing connectivity to partially served communities.

CSG West members interested in this topic are invited to attend the [Rural Broadband Forum](#) on July 30 during the CSG West Annual Meeting. Conversation between state legislators and industry champions will focus on the role of public-private partnerships, as well as this recent FCC development.