

## Position Statement on Broadband Expansion Legislation

**SUBJECT:** Legislation for expanding broadband and reducing its costs across NM

**POSITION:** It is important to increase broadband internet service across NM, for the well-being of New Mexico citizens and our economy.

**FACTS:** Approximately 77% of New Mexico households had a broadband subscription in 2018<sup>1</sup>, compared to 85% nationwide<sup>2</sup>. “The importance of high-speed internet service has come into particular focus during the coronavirus pandemic as New Mexicans turn more heavily to distance learning and telehealth programs that require online video conferencing.”<sup>3</sup> While there have been some funds allocated to expand internet services in New Mexico, what has been allocated has not bridged the digital divide, where kids in remote learning schools are faltering: those in lower income families are falling behind 8-10 months during remote learning (compared to 2-4 for median).<sup>4</sup>

The positive impact of broadband on the economy has been shown to be substantial. In low and middle income economies, like much of New Mexico, the GDP for our state can expect to increase 1.38% with every 10% increase in broadband penetration. Therefore, since 23% of NM households do not have broadband, expansion to full coverage would, over time, nearly double the GDP of our state compared to if we do not expand broadband.<sup>5</sup> Lets do this sooner rather than later.

1. Legislative Finance Committee, 8/17/2020, Report to the Science, Technology, Telecommunications Committee
2. FCC, 12/2020, *Bridging the Digital Divide*, <https://www.fcc.gov/about-fcc/fcc-initiatives/bridging-digital-divide-all-americans>
3. Dan McKay, 8/18/2020, Albuquerque Journal, *New Mexico Lawmakers Examine Broadband Expansion Strategies*
4. Wall Street Journal, December 10, 2020
5. Dr. Raul Katz, 2012, Columbia Institute for Tele-Information (CITI), Columbia University, [www.itu.int/broadban](http://www.itu.int/broadban)

**ASK:** Please let us know how we can advocate for this legislation and get back to me to schedule a zoom with me, and others in your district, so that we can hear each other’s perspective.

Sincerely,

Albuquerque Interfaith