

## ACCESS the Internet Act One-Pager

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans have had to adjust to a new way of working, learning, and accomplishing everyday tasks remotely. Successfully adapting to this new way of life requires high-speed broadband. This places an unfair burden on the many rural Americans who lack reliable connectivity.
- Addressing the broadband needs of rural America is largely a long-term infrastructure issue, but the current COVID-19 pandemic demands short-term solutions to help the families and businesses impacted by mandatory closures and interruptions.
- Hotspots and other Internet-connected devices are inexpensive, easily deployable, and can help address immediate connectivity needs while we continue to work to address longer-term challenges.
- That's why Senators Manchin and Cornyn have introduced the bipartisan ACCESS the Internet Act to provide broadband hotspots and ensure that all Americans have access to the reliable broadband they need to work, learn, and access essential services from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The bipartisan ACCESS the Internet Act authorizes \$2 billion in dedicated funding across the government for distance learning and telehealth initiatives, including:

### Distance Learning

- \$1.3 billion for the Department of Education, including a \$20% set aside for rural school districts to ensure they have the funding they need for distance learning
- \$200 million for the Institute for Museum & Library Services (IMLS), including a minimum allotment of \$1.6 million per State to allow States, Tribes, and Territories to purchase and distribute Internet-connected devices to libraries in low-income and rural areas, building on the HOTSPOTS Act introduced by Senators Manchin and Collins.

### Telehealth

- \$400 million for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) COVID-19 Telehealth Program, including a 20% set aside for small, rural providers that may have been left out of the competitive first round of telehealth funding
  - \$100 million for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Telehealth and Connected Care Services for the provision of Internet-connected devices and services for veterans in rural, unserved areas.
- Senators Manchin and Cornyn call for your support to help rural and low-income residents and close the digital divide.