

May 29, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
House of Representatives Minority Leader  
United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell,

The undersigned digital health stakeholder organizations strongly support access to affordable and reliable broadband services for all Americans. Telehealth has proven to be an effective, safe, and efficient way to deliver high quality healthcare services specifically for those living in rural areas and in underserved communities. In order to leverage telehealth to address health care disparities and give patients the ability to access resources and communicate with their care teams, we need to eliminate broadband deserts and ensure that everyone has access to vital digital health services. Unsurprisingly, one of the greatest contributors to this digital divide is affordability.

To address this, we are writing in support of maintaining the Affordability Connectivity Program (ACP) that was included in the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act). The Affordable Connectivity Program is a benefit program run by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that provides financial assistance to over 23 million households across the country to ensure they can afford broadband services and connected devices such as laptops, cell phones, tablets. Notably, 68% of those enrolled say they had inconsistent connectivity or zero connectivity prior to ACP.<sup>1</sup> This critical program has expanded access to fast and reliable internet and devices to households across the United States allowing more Americans, specifically in rural and underserved areas, to have the ability to participate in virtual healthcare visits.

Currently, funding for this program is set to run out at the end of this month, May 31, 2024. We urge Congress to act swiftly and pass the bipartisan, bicameral Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act ([S.3565](#), [HR 6929](#)). This legislation would provide an additional \$7 billion for the ACP and ensure millions of Americans, including senior citizens, veterans, school children, and residents of Tribal lands, do not lose access to this vital program, which in some cases may be there only way to access healthcare services. While the ACP extends beyond health care, the provisions can support patients' access to telehealth services like hospital at home, patient portals and electronic patient records, virtual scheduling, and remote patient monitoring — which are not possible without reliable internet.

Programs like the ACP help to eliminate disparities, bridge the digital divide, and support continued access to critical health care services for a diverse group of households across the United States. Therefore, we hope Congress takes swift action to enact this legislation.

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<sup>1</sup> [DOC-400836A1.pdf \(fcc.gov\)](#)



Thank you for your consistent support of telehealth. We look forward to working with you to ensure patients are able to continue accessing fast and reliable internet and safe, affordable, and effective healthcare services.

Kind regards,

ATA Action  
American Telemedicine Association  
HIMSS  
Partnership to Advance Virtual Care (PAVC)