



August 18th, 2026

Chairman Anchía and Members
House Subcommittee on Telecommunications & Broadband Development
Texas House of Representatives

RE: Written Testimony on Broadband Development

Chairman Anchía and Members of the Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the Broadband Development Office (BDO), the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, and the Broadband Infrastructure Fund.

Reliable internet access is increasingly important to Texans. The question before policymakers is not whether broadband matters, but whether government-directed broadband expansion represents the most effective, accountable, and fiscally responsible means of achieving that goal.

Texas Policy Research supports the recent calls by Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and Speaker Dustin Burrows for a comprehensive audit of the BDO. Before additional taxpayer dollars are committed, the Legislature should have confidence that existing programs are transparent, efficiently administered, and producing measurable results. Taxpayers deserve to know how funds have been allocated, whether projects are meeting performance expectations, and whether awarded projects would have occurred without state intervention.

The Legislature should also evaluate whether current programs are unintentionally distorting the telecommunications marketplace. Government subsidies inevitably influence investment decisions, favor certain providers over others, and risk discouraging private capital from entering markets that otherwise could become economically viable. Public dollars should not be used to replace private investment where competitive solutions remain possible.

Texas has already committed billions of dollars through state and federal broadband initiatives. As these programs mature, legislative oversight should shift from authorizing new expenditures toward measuring outcomes, identifying inefficiencies, and ensuring that funds are not wasted through duplication, overbuilding, or politically driven grant decisions.

While rural connectivity remains an important objective, technological innovation continues to reshape broadband deployment. Fixed wireless services, low-earth-orbit satellite providers such as Starlink, and future private-sector technologies may provide cost-effective alternatives to traditional fiber deployment in many underserved areas. State policy should remain technologically neutral and avoid locking taxpayers into infrastructure models that may become obsolete or unnecessarily expensive.

The Legislature should also review regulatory barriers that increase deployment costs. Streamlining permitting, improving access to rights-of-way, addressing unnecessary delays in pole attachment negotiations, and reducing regulatory burdens can often expand broadband availability without requiring ongoing taxpayer subsidies.

Broadband policy should ultimately reflect Texas's longstanding commitment to free enterprise, private property rights, fiscal responsibility, and limited government. Government has an appropriate role in establishing clear rules and ensuring accountability, but lasting connectivity will be achieved through competitive markets, innovation, and private investment rather than permanent government intervention.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued oversight of these important programs.

For Liberty, For Texas!

Jeremy D. Kitchen
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