

Talking Points for Advocating for the Extension of ACP (Affordable Connectivity Program)

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How to Use This Document

- We anticipate that advocacy to extend ACP will be most crucial in August and September 2023, and probably beyond.
- Where to use these talking points:
 - Meetings with lawmakers
 - Interviews with press/media
 - Advocating for ACP through your website, blog, and social media
 - Gaining other allies with resources (your local government, companies, partners, or other connections)
- These points will help you communicate ACP's impact to policymakers across the political spectrum, even if you're not sure they support ACP.
 - [Find your members of Congress](#)
 - If you would like to meet in person, call or email your representative's office and ask to schedule a meeting. Their contact information is located on their official congressional website (url ends with ".gov"). You may not be able to meet directly with your representative, but members of their staff may be available. This is normal. Congressional staff will relay the information you share with them to the representative.
- These talking points are a guide. Pick and choose what points work well for you and for your particular audience/policymaker.
- Prepare for the conversation. Make the conversation your own and represent your community, while also getting across key points.
- If you don't have a personal or community-specific story, just state the importance and value of ACP and call to action.
- Emphasize with policymakers that ACP already has bipartisan support. ACP (and universal access to internet service) is not a partisan issue – it benefits everyone!

Talking Points

Why are we having this conversation?

- ACP will run out of funds by mid-2024, if not sooner.
- Over 20 million households rely on ACP to stay online. If Congress does not act soon, these Americans risk losing their home internet service.

Introducing ACP

You may need to provide a brief background on ACP. Consider your listener/audience and if it's necessary to review the basics of the program.

- The FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) provides a monthly benefit to qualifying US households to bring down the cost of broadband.
- ACP helps people in households with low incomes, including families with children who receive free and reduced-price school lunch and people who receive veterans pension and survivor benefits.

How People Benefit from ACP (in Your Community)

Choose 1-3 benefits/populations to focus on in your conversation. Think about what points will resonate most with your listener/audience.

Tip on Making It Your Own: Storytelling can be a powerful tool in advocacy! Represent and reflect how your own community benefits by including a brief story about someone you've served and how they're using ACP.

- **[# OF ENROLLED HOUSEHOLDS]** households rely on ACP for broadband in our state.
- **[# OF ENROLLED HOUSEHOLDS]** households rely on ACP for broadband in Tribal lands.
- ACP is an important tool in closing the homework gap—the opportunity divide between students who have home internet access and those who don't.
- Jobseekers need home internet access to perform all the functions of gaining employment – from searching for job openings to filling out applications, communicating with potential employers by email, and even doing virtual interviews.
- ACP helps Americans get needed medical attention and wellness care through telehealth appointments, use internet-enabled medical devices, and exchange critical information with their doctors even when they're not able to physically go into an office.
- ACP helps older adults stay socially engaged with their families and friends, access health information, get community updates and news, and even order groceries. Adults 65+ make up [20 percent](#) of ACP recipient households.

Benefits of ACP for ISPs and Federal Initiatives

- Internet service providers can get more consumers on their networks, which helps support the business case for deploying broadband network infrastructure. In other words, areas that are currently unconnected may get internet access faster if ACP continues.

- Research shows that broadband benefit programs for low-income households improve their employment rates and earnings¹—this gives a boost to the economy as a whole.
- ACP supports the success of other federal broadband initiatives, such as the Federal [Capital Projects Fund](#) (CPF) and [Broadband Equity Access and Deployment](#) (BEAD) Program, which both require participation in the ACP and/or proposed strategies to address affordability issues.

Bipartisan Support for ACP

The need for affordable broadband is so essential that it unites people from across the geographic and political spectrums.

- [Among voters](#), ACP has broad support:
 - 78 percent of voters support continuing ACP
 - 64% of Republicans; 70% of Independents; and 95% of Democrats
 - People across geographic areas support continuing ACP
 - 81% of urban voters; 78% of suburban; and 68% of rural voters
- Among lawmakers, ACP has bi-partisan support:
 - [28 governors](#) – Republicans and Democrats – have voiced support for ACP as of August 22, 2023.
 - 45 bipartisan [members of Congress](#) publicly expressed support for extending ACP on August 17, 2023

The Ask/Call to Action

(Note: This is the suggested ask as of Aug. 28, 2023. Please keep in mind that messaging around this topic will change with time. Also, education and advocacy are distinct from lobbying, particularly when there is not a specific piece of legislation in play, as is the case at the time of this document’s publication. See [NDIA’s blog](#) for updates on ACP.)

- Keep broadband affordable. Do not let 20 million Americans have their internet access turned off.
- Keep ACP funded through 2024.

¹ Blair Levin, “Washington May Be About to Take a Giant Step Backward In Closing the Digital Divide”(Blog), March 13, 2023
<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/washington-may-be-about-to-take-a-giant-step-backward-in-closing-the-digital-divide/>