

# A Groundswell of Support for Immediate Action to Modernize E-Rate and Close the Wi-Fi Gap

## Education Groups

*"It is imperative to update the current E-Rate rules, so these funds can be used to meet urgent needs to expand access to high-speed broadband and improve Wi-Fi and internal connections. The failure to do so could delay, by another year, the benefits of new technologies to at least 6 million schoolchildren, as well as add to the long-term cost of the program."*

Letter from Lee Bollinger, James Coulter, Margaret Spellings, James Steyer, Leading Education by Advancing Digital (LEAD) Commission Co-Chairs, June 19, 2014

*"To ensure that every student and adult has an equal opportunity to learn and be prepared to participate in the knowledge economy, we must connect our schools and libraries to high-capacity broadband and deploy ubiquitous wireless networks throughout the school and library so that the needs of today's and tomorrow's learners can be met."*

[Letter from over 100 organizations](#), including more than 50 school districts, libraries, national education organizations, technology advocates, businesses, foundations, and civil rights organizations, June 12, 2014

*"The Education Coalition urges the Commission to take decisive action to reform the E-rate program this summer. It is critical that the Commission move forward on this once-in-a-generation opportunity to reorient the program to support digital learning and 21st Century broadband connectivity including the development of clear incentives to the formation of consortia to promote bulk purchasing and economies of scale."*

[Letter from the Education Coalition](#) (Council of Chief State School Officers, Foundation for Excellence in Education, Alliance for Excellent Education, Chiefs for Change, International Association for K-12 Online (INACOL), Knowledge Alliance, and the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation), May 29, 2014

*"Throughout its E-rate modernization proceeding, the FCC has placed significant emphasis on evaluating and addressing the current lack of funding for LAN and Wi-Fi networks. Solving this issue has received nearly universal support from commenters. The major conclusion from the model was a need for approximately \$800 million per year of dedicated additional E-rate funding for core WAN, LAN and Wi-Fi equipment in order to meet the ConnectED goals over the next four years."*

[EducationSuperHighway/CoSN "LAN/Wi-Fi ConnectED Cost Model" filing](#), May 28, 2014

## **Members of Congress**

*“We encourage rapid action now, and comprehensive reform in no less than one year. Implementing changes in time for the next E-rate funding year will have a profoundly positive impact in many areas of the country. There is no time to waste.”*

[Bipartisan letter from 17 Members of Congress](#), June 19, 2014

Rep. G. K. Butterfield (D-NC)	Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC)
Rep. Reuben Hinojosa (D-TX)	Rep. Walter B. Jones (R-NC)
Rep. David Scott (D-GA)	Rep. Richard Hudson (R-NC)
Rep. Gene Green (D-TX)	Rep. Shelia Jackson Lee (D-TX)
Rep. Juan Vargas (D-CA)	Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL)
Rep. Hank Johnson (D-GA)	Rep. Cedric Richmond (D-LA)
Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN)	Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM)
Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA)	Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME)
Rep. William Enyart (D-IL)	

*“...we ask you to take swift action to update and expand the E-rate program to bring high-speed broadband and transformative learning opportunities to every school and library in America.”*

Bipartisan letter from Senators Bennet, Isakson, and King, June 13, 2014

*“We are proud to support, in a bipartisan manner, the recommended update to the E-rate program. We believe the FCC should...ensure that program rules result in funding stability to improve program efficiency and schools’ financial planning, particularly for broadband connections within schools and libraries (particularly for Wi-Fi) where there has been a lack of certainty in the past.”*

[Bipartisan letter from 46 Members of Congress](#), June 2, 2014, including:

Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI)	Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY)	Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-OR)
Rep. Charles Dent (R-PA)	Rep. Elizabeth Esty (D-CT)	Rep. David Scott (D-GA)
Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO)	Rep. Bill Foster (D-IL)	Rep. Juan Vargas (D-CA)
Rep. Chris Gibson (R-NY)	Rep. Pete Gallego (D-TX)	Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL)
Rep. Suzan DelBene (D-WA)	Rep. Denny Heck (R-NV)	
Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL)	Rep. James Himes (D-CT)	
Rep. John Delaney (D-MD)	Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ)	
Rep. Richard Hanna (R-NY)	Rep. Steve Israel (D-NY)	
Rep. Joe Garcia (D-FL)	Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA)	
Rep. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK)	Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ)	
Rep. Scott Peters (D-CA)	Rep. Ann McLane Kuster (D-NH)	
Rep. Don Young (R-AK)	Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY)	
Rep. Ron Barber (D-AZ)	Rep. Patrick Murphy (D-FL)	
Rep. Ami Bera (D-AZ)	Rep. William Owens (D-NY)	
Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA)	Rep. Ed Perlmutter (D-CO)	
Rep. Tony Cardenas (D-CA)	Rep. Gary Peters (D-MI)	
Rep. John Carney (D-DE)	Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL)	
Rep. Andre Carson (D-IN)	Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL)	
Rep. Gerald Connolly (D-VA)	Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA)	
Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN)	Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA)	
Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA)	Rep. Bradley Schneider (D-IL)	

## **State and Local Government Leaders**

*“As Governors committed to ensuring that our students have access to 21st Century learning opportunities, we are writing to support your efforts to modernize the E-rate program and accelerate Wi-Fi access to millions more students this next funding year. The consequences of inaction are enormous. Without action on new rules by this summer, we will miss out on the opportunity to impact investments in Wi-Fi for this coming funding year, and millions of our students will needlessly continue to be left behind...we believe your approach is prudent to begin closing the Wi-Fi gap now while continuing to look at the longer-term program needs. We are committed, therefore, to continuing to support your efforts to modernize, expand, and strengthen the E-Rate program as you move forward.”*

[Bipartisan letter from Governors Pat McCrory \(NC\), Phil Bryant \(MS\), John Kitzhaber \(OR\), Martin O’Malley \(MD\), and Terry McAuliffe \(VA\)](#), June 19, 2014

*“It’s our duty to create an atmosphere that’s conducive to providing North Carolina’s students with the best education possible. This task becomes more difficult when teachers do not have access to 21st-century tools. Wi-Fi should no longer be considered an amenity when it comes to preparing students to compete in a global economy.”*

[Statement of North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory](#), June 19, 2014

*“I am writing to urge the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to take swift action to strengthen and modernize the E-Rate program to ensure that schools and libraries have access to robust Internet services... Schools and libraries have the potential to support sustained economic growth for our nation’s workforce, both present and future. We cannot stand idly by when connecting such vital institutions are so close to our reach and, therefore, urge the FCC to modernize and streamline this critically important program for schools and libraries.”*

[Letter from the National League of Cities](#), May 2, 2014

*“We write to urge swift action to improve and modernize the E-Rate program to connect schools and libraries in every county in America with high-speed broadband within the next five years...We believe that Internet access to the schoolhouse door is insufficient for the digital age. To remain competitive, we must ensure that every child in every classroom has robust access to the Internet.”*

[Letter from the National Association of Counties](#), April 7, 2014

*“We are writing to urge swift action to modernize the E-rate program in order to connect 99 percent of our schoolchildren with high-speed broadband over the next five years. This critical update is absolutely needed to bring high-speed broadband to every school and library and Wi-Fi to every classroom. It’s the single most important step we can take to connect our children to digital learning opportunities that will give them the technological skills they need for the future.”*

[Letter from U.S. Conference of Mayors](#), March 17, 2014

## **Technology Providers**

*“HP, one of the world’s largest IT companies, knows from experience that schools and libraries have a particularly urgent need for funding for internal connections, to enable them to actually put digital learning tools into the hands of students and library patrons. We commend your proposal to make targeted reforms to the program and to use the \$2 billion in additional funding as a down payment that can be put to work immediately, to invest broadly in Wi-Fi and other critical internal infrastructure upgrades for schools and libraries.”*

[Letter from HP](#), June 18, 2014

*“Without a doubt, our educational customers find that the biggest barrier to achieving their goals is the inability to provide adequate connectivity within school and library buildings. American educators’ ability to participate in digital learning revolution will be irretrievably delayed unless a reliable funding source for internal connects is in place for the 2015 E-rate funding year.”*

[Letter from Cisco](#), June 17, 2014

*“As CEOs and innovators working to unlock the power of technology to personalize learning, empower teachers, connect parents, and ensure equal educational opportunity for all, we are writing to urge swift action to modernize the E-rate program and connect America's students to high-speed broadband and ubiquitous Wi-Fi.”*

[Letter from over 100 Ed-Tech CEO’s and innovators](#), June 17, 2014

*“The FCC is currently revamping the E-rate program to respond to the changing broadband needs of schools and libraries. As part of these reforms, the FCC has identified \$2 billion within the existing program that it can use to fund broadband. If this proposal is adopted, schools and libraries that have not been able to access funding for Wi-Fi will now be able to offer wireless broadband to their students and educators. High-speed broadband will no longer be limited to the front office or computer lab, but can be untethered and available to each student on individual devices. And this can be done immediately without collecting a single additional dollar from consumers that pay into the fund. This is a clear win-win solution for everyone and NCTA strongly encourages the FCC to put this proposal into action as quickly as possible.”*

[Blog from NCTA – The Cable Association](#), June 17, 2014

*“America's schools need an upgrade. We must leverage technology to transform education and prepare our youth for the knowledge economy. To ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to participate in the knowledge economy, we must connect our schools to fiber and deploy ubiquitous wireless networks to all of our classrooms.”*

[Letter from over 50 prominent CEOs and business leaders](#), January 30, 2014