



To: The Honorable Senators Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey *and*
The Honorable Representatives Jake Auchincloss, Katherine Clark,
William Keating, Stephen Lynch, James McGovern, Seth Moulton, Richard Neal, Ayanna
Pressley and Lori Trahan

Dear Senators and Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,

Thank you all for your ongoing support and efforts on behalf of the Commonwealth and its citizens who experience the negative impact of the digital divide on a daily basis.

As the momentous infrastructure legislation moves forward, we understand there will be numerous challenges on how to best allocate funds. We hope you will consider these **five fundamental truths** as you discuss and debate the impact that these funds can have on communities in the Commonwealth.

- 1. Federal funding should first bolster and expand on local efforts and resources already in place.** The economics of market-based solutions and lack of competition has contributed significantly to the pervasive and crippling digital divide. There is no reason any resident should pay hundreds of dollars per month for service. Public funding for fiber expansion is the only way to ensure that every resident—regardless of income, race, ethnicity, or any other demographic category — can access and subscribe to robust, affordable, and reliable connectivity.
- 2. The process must be data-driven, utilizing reliable, local data.** The FCC data is flawed based on self-reporting from providers. Good policy is evidence-driven, with data from multiple local sources.
- 3. Competition is key to improving consumer choice, affordability, and service reliability.** It is commonplace within the corporate telecommunications lexicon to refer to the kind of expansion we envision with the improperly hijacked and misleading term: “overbuilding.” However, we see our efforts for what they really are: offering a choice in Internet services to businesses and residents.
- 4. We support 100/100 minimums.** 25/3 Mbps was insufficient a decade ago and remains far too low today. Instead, we must set realistic goals and utilize metrics and measures that are future-focused.
- 5. Lastly, one size doesn’t fit all.** Funding should address the nuance of local situations in coastal communities where the incumbent providers continue to underinvest. Communities must be equipped to respond to dramatic seasonal population shifts and ever-changing public safety requirements.

Non-profit OpenCape was a 2009 BTOP recipient and has grown our 100% fiber network to over 100,000 fiber miles while servicing municipalities, businesses, and residents. Our growth is proof that community-focused mission and fiscal stability can co-exist and serve as a model for the future. We hope that these truths will be useful guidance as specific policies are evaluated for the infrastructure rulemaking and allocations. Thank you again for your ongoing efforts.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steven Johnston', is written over the 'Yours Sincerely,' text.

Steven Johnston, Chief Executive Officer & Executive Director, OpenCape Corporation