

Enterprise Community Partners

Transcript of Webinar

2021 ConnectHomeUSA

**ISP Stakeholders Participation in the Emergency Broadband Benefit
Program**

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

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Caila Prendergast: All right. I think we've got a good crew here. So we can go ahead and jump in. My name is Caila Prendergast for those who haven't joined a ConnectHomeUSA webinar before, welcome. I'm one of your hosts today along with Dina Lehmann-Kim, the HUD ConnectHome program manager.

And before we dive in, I just have a few housekeeping items to go over really quickly. Our speakers from our ISP stakeholders will share their knowledge with us for the first part of the presentation and we'll reserve all remaining time for questions. Because there's so many panelists today, we're going to ask that all questions be directed to me in the chat box.

You know, for ease of the Q&A session, if you have a question very specific service provider, make sure to include that in your question or if you want to ask all the service providers, include that in your question as well just so that I know who to direct the question towards. And as you may have noticed, all webinar participants are muted upon entry.

We do sometimes get some glitches where attendees are unmuted. So just make sure to double-check that you're muted so that we can avoid any feedback. If you're having any technical difficulties, please send us a message in the chat box. The webinar today is being recorded and will be available on HUD Exchange in the next few weeks.

The PowerPoint slides for today's session were shared with all registrants prior to today's session and will be shared again following today's session and also will be posted on HUD Exchange along with the recording. Immediately following the webinar you'll receive an invitation to complete a survey, please take a moment to fill that out. We really appreciate any feedback that you have for us. And I think with that, I'll pass it over to Dina.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much, Caila and thank you, everyone, for joining. We have such a wonderful audience today. We do have a very ambitious agenda. So let's get started. I am very pleased to introduce Peggy Bailey, a senior advisor to HUD Secretary Fudge who will make opening remarks for us. So I'll now pass the baton, excuse me, over to you, Peggy.

Peggy Bailey: Thanks, Dina. And good afternoon and welcome to today's ConnectHomeUSA webinar. I'm Peggy Bailey, the senior advisor on rental assistance to Secretary Fudge and I'm pleased to be with you all today. Having a reliable and affordable connection to broadband is essential today.

The pandemic underscored just how critical having convenient in-home access to broadband is. It also underscored that the digital divide continues to persist especially among low-income communities of color in urban areas and for many living in rural America. According to a recent Pew Research Center study, 80 percent of white people say that they had in-home Internet compared to 71 percent of black and 65 percent of Hispanics.

Well, with regard to income, Pew also found that 57 percent of people with incomes below \$30,000 a year had home broadband service compared to 92 percent of those who earn \$75,000 or more a year and 37 percent of students in rural communities lack adequate Internet access

compared to 21 percent of their urban counterpart based on an analysis by Boston Consulting Group and Common Sense Media.

President Biden and Secretary Fudge are committed to expanding broadband access to all families. This is why the American Jobs Plan includes a historic \$100 billion investment in broadband with the goals of building the infrastructure for 100 percent high-speed broadband coverage, promoting price transparency and provider competition and making broadband affordable for every American.

HUD will also continue to do its part to help public housing agencies, tribes and other housing partners connect to these new opportunities and to continue to explore ways to expand access to broadband. The program we will discuss today, the Emergency Broadband Benefit, or EBB, is the federal government's response to helping low-income Americans across the country afford quality broadband in their homes during the pandemic.

Congress appropriated \$3.2 billion for this program. Today we will hear from six Internet providers, all of which are ConnectHomeUSA stakeholders. They will talk about their participation in the EBB program and how you can help residents take advantage of this important benefit.

On behalf of Secretary Fudge, I'd like to thank AT&T, Comcast, Cox, PCs for People, Starry and T-Mobile for their support in the ConnectHomeUSA initiative. I'd also like to take a moment to recognize and thank our housing partners.

You all have worked tirelessly during the pandemic to keep our most vulnerable citizens safe, healthy and yes, connected to schools, employment, healthcare providers and to important information, not to mention all of the personal sacrifices you've had to make in dealing with the pandemic at home.

In the weeks and months ahead, HUD will continue to bring you information and resources to make sure we are getting resources to our residents and their communities. Thank you for inviting me to join you all this afternoon and enjoy today's discussion. Now I'll turn it back to Dina.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much, Peggy, for taking the time to be with us today and for those wonderful remarks, really appreciate it. All right. So I'm going to give you a brief overview of the EBB program. Just to let you all know, we did a webinar in April on this topic and SEC also did one in April and we do have links to both of those later in the program.

And so these slides are actually -- the ones that I'm going to go over are from that presentation in April that SEC provided. Next slide, please. So the Emergency Broadband Benefit is a federal communications program that was funded by Congress to provide a temporary discount on mostly broadband bills for qualifying low-income households.

So eligible households can receive up to \$50 a month in a discount for broadband services, up to \$75 a month in a discount for broadband services for people on tribal land and a one-time

discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer or tablet purchased through a participating provider.

And when we say participating provider, we mean a participating Internet service provider. Next slide. So who qualifies for this benefit?

A household is eligible, if any member, received a Pell Grant in the current year, participates in the free or reduced school lunch program or school breakfast program, experienced a substantial loss of income since February 29, 2020 and the household had a total income in 2020 below \$99,000 for single filers or \$198,000 for joint filers or if they meet the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or low-cost offer or their COVID-19 offer or if they qualify for the Lifeline Program and I'll just touch quickly on what the Lifeline Program is.

Next slide, please. So Lifeline is another federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone and Internet services. This program has been around for many years. Eligible customers can get up to \$9.25 or up to \$34.25 on tribal land towards their bill. So eligibility is based on household income, if it's less than 135 percent of the federal poverty guidelines or if a member -- a household participates in one of these programs.

And I won't read them all, but I do want to call your attention to the Federal Public Housing Assistance criteria on. That -- because of the way it's termed, it might lead people to believe that it's only for public housing, it actually covers public housing, housing choice vouchers and project-based rental assistance.

Next slide, please. So this is a new program. Congress funded it a few months ago and asked the FCC to stand it up quickly, which they did. So because it's new, we're sort of building the plane as we're flying it -- or I should say not we, but FCC and USAC, I'll talk about that in a second. So it's probably not perfect.

And so just -- you know, we're learning as we go and I think trying to tweak as we go. So please be patient. The other point that I want to make is that it's a temporary program. Although it's funded at \$3.2 billion, the program is scheduled to end once the program funds are exhausted or 6 months after the Department of Health and Human Services declares an end to the pandemic, whichever comes first.

And as I alluded, the program is administered by USAC, which also administers the Lifeline Program. Next slide, please. So there are three main ways that somebody can enroll for EBB. One is to apply by a service provider, and that's the point of today's webinar, you're going to hear about each of the providers are doing this, and you can go to find out which providers are participating in EBB by going to the website you see here.

This website will also allow you to apply via the second option, which is through the Universal Service Administrative Company, or USAC National Verifier at this website or option three, for people who don't have Internet, is to call the EBB Support Center at the number you see here.

Now, if you're working with residents, say you're a [inaudible] coordinator or an FSS coordinator, for example, you could also download the application and print it out for your residents by going to this website. Next slide, please. So I did want to also talk about consumer protections that FCC shared with us.

So let me just -- it's divided into two categories. Participating providers, or Internet service companies, must give customers notice about the last date or billing cycle that the full benefit will apply. Again, because this is a temporary program, the funds will probably run out. And so there could be cases where the funding -- there will be cases where the funding will end.

So participating providers must also provide information about when a partial benefit will apply to their bill and information about the cost of their broadband service after the program ends. And so then the customers have responsibilities as well, they will need to opt in or request to continue broadband services with their providers.

If customers don't opt in or select a new service plan with their EBB provider, their broadband service will end once the program ends. Even if a customer had service with the same provider before enrolling in the EBB, they will need to opt in to continue broadband service after the program ends. All right. Next slide.

So if you have questions, we've provided a lot of resources here. I'd like to call your attention to item number three, which talks about acceptable documents that can be used to validate eligibility for this program. There's also a very comprehensive FAQ and also if you're just interested in seeing how many people have registered so far, you can go to the program enrollment tracker.

They still don't have the amount of money that has been consumed by the program yet, but it looks like that will be updated pretty soon. Next slide, please. And now it gives me great pleasure to introduce our first presenter, Jovan Hicks. Jovan currently works as an area manager at AT&T California's External and Legislative Affairs organization where she leads the outreach effort and strategic development through the access from AT&T program, a low-cost broadband offer.

She also manages 211 call activations and service quality measures for the state of California with AT&T. Additionally, Jovan serves on the board of directors of everyone EveryoneOn, a national nonprofit who HUD has worked with for many years on ConnectHome and their mission, as many of you will know, is to connect low-income families to affordable Internet service, computers and digital skills training. With that, it's my pleasure to pass the baton over to you, Jovan. Thank you.

Jovan Hicks: Thank you so much. And good morning, good afternoon, everyone and thank you to the ConnectHomeUSA family and HUD for inviting AT&T to participate on this panel.

We are excited to join other ISPs in extending the EBB benefit to our customers and really, our participation is part of a broader commitment of \$2 billion over a 3-year period for low-cost

broadband service offerings and community investment to help bridge the digital divide and make broadband more affordable.

So on your screen I have some general information about our participation in the program, but I will speak in more detail about the particulars of our offer and on the right side is a snapshot of our flyer, which lists the links to our EBB website and other helpful websites where you can learn more information.

This flyer will also, I believe, be made available to you after the webinar and I will also spend a little bit of time speaking about our Access from AT&T program, which although it is a separate program, it does receive some of the benefits awarded for the EBB. So let's jump right in. We can actually go back to the previous slide.

So we've selected a range of wireless plans designed to meet the needs of eligible customers and in many cases, as with the Access from AT&T program, the benefit could take the monthly cost to \$0 per month during the time the EBB is available. The benefit can be applied to select AT&T Internet plans as well as AT&T Prepaid Wireless plans or to select Cricket Wireless plans.

Excuse me. In terms of our geographic restrictions, we offer a prepaid wireless service with Nationwide via Cricket Wireless and AT&T Prepaid. The EBB can be applied to eligible customers throughout those service areas as well as to customers with home Internet within our 21-state wireline footprint. So we offer both Nationwide for our wireless services and then also our 21-state wireline footprint.

So the process for enrollment is pretty simple, customers must first apply and be approved for the EBB by the federal government through the National Verifier website and eligibility is determined by the federal government and not by AT&T. A customer may also get approved online in just a few minutes, but it may take a few days depending on whether or not the customer's application requires a manual review.

So once a customer is approved through the National Verifier, customers will be able to order new AT&T Internet or Prepaid Wireless service or have the benefit applied to their existing service and it usually takes between one to three billing cycles for the benefit to appear on a customer's bill, although, we're seeing more around the one to two billing cycles currently.

And of course, more details about the exact process you can find on our att.com/ebb website. We also offer, for existing customers, if you'd like, we have an 800-number setup to call and sign up and if you are a Cricket Wireless customer, you can visit the Cricket Wireless website specific to the EBB program to order service and have benefits applied that way.

One thing I want to mention is although the EBB provisions for customers to receive the one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a connected device, which would be a laptop, a desktop computer or a tablet, our current tablet portfolio pricing falls outside of the requirements of the EBB program.

So we will not be able to offer the device benefit on tablets for EBB and also smartphones are not eligible as well. Again, I'll just mention, you can find out more information, general information, about what AT&T -- the ways in which AT&T is supporting the EBB program at att.com/ebb.

You can go to the next slide. So I want to touch a little bit on our access from AT&T program, because as many of you may know, the Access from AT&T program was birthed from part of our merger requirement with DirectTV and we have since fulfilled that obligation and we are offering -- we continue to offer the Access from AT&T program.

That offer provides wireline home Internet with speeds up to 10 megabits per second. That has expanded in response to COVID and the national health crisis to 25 megs. We've also extended some of our qualifiers whereas our general qualifications were SNAP as a qualifier or in California only, SSI.

We have since expanded into income-based eligibility, which is helpful with income based on 135 percent or less than the poverty guidelines. We also have the National School Lunch Program and Head Start programs as a temporary qualifier. Those temporary benefits we have extended through the end of the year.

That was resent. I think previously on our flyers we had listed the end of July as our deadline, but we have extended that through the end of the year. So the question is if you are currently participating in the Access program can you also participate in the EBB, absolutely.

So households that currently participate in Access will need to verify their EBB eligibility through the National Verifier first and if a household chooses to apply its EBB to its Access from AT&T service, the maximum monthly benefit would be \$10, because that's the maximum amount the customer would pay for that service and then once it is applied, that customer would pay nothing for the Access program.

They may also choose to apply their benefit to AT&T's other participating home Internet options if they choose not to use it for the Access program. So what would that look like? A household would continue to pay \$10 a month for Access and once its EBB eligibility is approved by the National Verifier, they would be eligible to receive the one monthly benefit of up to \$50 a month on an eligible plan offered by Cricket or AT&T Prepaid.

And if you visit our website -- our att.com/ebb site, it lists each of our plans and what the cost would be for the customer. It also breaks down the data allowance, it breaks down the equipment fee and what you would pay with EBB and what you would pay without EBB. So that's a good place to check in for more information.

And in closing -- oh, one other thing I want to mention, which is on the slide here, is -- if you go to the next slide, so our website for the Access program, on the site, if you would like to sign up for the Access program, you can verify if this offer is available at your home address. Again, it is a wireline offer. So it falls within our 21-state wireline footprint.

It is not available in all 50 states. So make sure you check that first and on your screen is the information to find out more information. So in closing, I'll just say keeping communities connected and working to close the digital divide is really a top priority for AT&T and we commend the FCC for quickly developing a program that will enable more Americans to afford broadband connectivity during these unprecedented times.

And while the EBB will help address the immediate needs of many households affected by the pandemic, we will continue to work with Congress and others to identify permanent and sustainable funding solutions for universal service programs and to refocus the low-income connectivity program in a consumer-driven manner. So thank you for allowing this time and I will turn it back to our moderator.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Jovan, thank you so much for providing such a detailed description of how you're -- how AT&T is participating. And now it gives me great pleasure to introduce Jackie Puente who is currently the executive director for external affairs at Comcast NBCUniversal who -- and she is responsible for partnerships with diverse stakeholders on policy issues in the media and technology industry.

Throughout her career Ms. Puente has served as a translator between public, private and nonprofit entities. She promotes sustainable and equitable growth. Today she is also active on multiple boards to advance economic opportunity and social justice, including the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, [inaudible] National Jobs for Progress, AAPD and Virginia Community Capital LOCUS.

She resides in the D.C. metro area with her family and you may be a neighbor of mine, Jackie, I didn't even know this. So with that, I'll pass it over to you. Thank you so much.

Jackie Puente: Fantastic. Thank you so much and it's a pleasure to be here and I really appreciate the opportunity from ConnectHomeUSA and HUD. This is such an important program and I'm delighted to be here with practitioners who are on the front lines connecting communities, which is just incredibly important work right now as it has been for many years, but I think we've all learned through this pandemic it's incredibly important right now.

We can go to the next slide. So many of you probably are already familiar with Internet Essentials from Comcast. I've been with the company for 10 years. This program launched right when I joined the company and was really focused on helping close the digital divide.

And I can tell you all that I joined the company in 2012, it was that people obviously knew the digital divide was a real issue, there was a lot of resources, a lot of research going into broadband adoption and I think Dina, some of your comments earlier and the research that we've seen from Pew in recent months really illuminates that this is something that -- this is an issue that people have been tracking for a long time.

But obviously, the pandemic and our national response moving to physical distancing and learning from home, working from home really put a spotlight on what it means to have connectivity at home and this is something that Comcast has been working on for over 10 years

and this year we're celebrating the 10th-year anniversary of Internet Essentials and we've seen how this program has grown from being able to offer families with students that were K through 12 in the National School Lunch program receiving free and reduced price lunch, giving them the opportunity to have high-speed Internet at home for \$9.95 a month plus the option of getting a device for less than \$150 plus I think what we've learned is most important, the digital literacy, digital skills training so they can be a part of our digital society and digital economy.

And we've tackled this issue with all three legs of that stool. So cost, the hardware and the skills training for 10 years and we've been able to bring a lot of the lessons learned from this program into our thinking about the Emergency Broadband Benefit and that's why I raise this.

This is something, when we realized the pandemic was not going to end overnight and we were coming together with government and nonprofit partners to try and look at solutions for how we could help [inaudible]. We were able to reflect on all this learning and all this knowledge that we have from Internet Essentials to really help put together a program.

And one other thing I'll mention here that's really important was in 2016, as we were expanding this program including more and more communities, aging people, people with disabilities, [inaudible] communities, we realized that a partnership with HUD was critical. And so in 2016, community people that were living in public housing and that were a part of HUD programs, they were all eligible for Internet Essentials.

So we've been able to, for five years now, look on our experience with HUD and our partnership there to really help elevate what we're doing and to help underserved communities get Internet. Moving over to the next slide. So like other companies, and I know AT&T just mentioned this, we've made the Emergency Broadband Benefit available to anybody who's using Xfinity service.

So meaning that anybody can qualify through the program, they can apply the benefit towards any tier of Xfinity service. Obviously, focusing on low-income communities, we have low-cost products that are very efficient for low-income consumers.

So in particular, for folks that are using Internet Essentials but also some of our economical packages, we've found that opening up this benefit to every product in our portfolio has been amazing and we've seen people use the analogy of building a plane as we're flying it, but we've seen that working across all tiers of service that we've had incredible response from our community partners that have worked on Internet Essentials and other Internet service offerings that we have and we've been able to really help bring new folks into this program and really expand access to broadband at home, which is what we think the real thrust of this program is.

We can go to the next slide. So as other companies have walked through, it's a very straightforward process and I will say over this entire process that we have, we have two really important goals in mind at Comcast. One is obviously to keep people connected and connect the unconnected.

So obviously, for families that have had economic hardship as a result of the pandemic and the economic turmoil that's followed, we want to keep people connected and when the pandemic

began in March, April, 2020, we did many things to help keep people connected to broadband, that was one of our top goals.

And so we've maintained that top of mind in this program. The second thing has been to have that element of transparency and really to avoid bill shock and credit issues be related to having Internet service. So as we have this process to apply one, where people go through the National Verifier, much like AT&T, we confirm eligibility.

Second step, we allow people to shop Xfinity products or apply for Internet Essentials, which is a process we've made much simpler over time. I know many people, when they first started using the product, we had a lot of feedback from partner organizations and consumer groups and this is something that I'm so proud of how we've been able to really invest in this system and make it more usable for our practitioners on the front lines.

We've made it incredibly easy for people with -- that are helping immigrant families, undocumented families, mixed-status families get access to the Internet.

So we've really eliminated many of the barriers. We've made the text much more intuitive and we've done a lot to ensure that people with various language barriers will be able to access this content and then we've made it very clear that we're going to have billing and notifications that are very clear for customers so they understand how much they're being billed and they can really take control of their billing and credit processes.

We can go to the next slide. And this is really -- you know, this program is something that we realize is one element of our overall company's goal to encourage broadband adoption, but again, starting with our Internet Essentials program 10 years ago and our goal to increase digital literacy and now what we call digital equity across the country, we see this EBB as being one way to help introduce broadband to new consumers.

We're also looking, like AT&T said also and others have mentioned, to have this program be the basis that we can use to create more permanent broadband benefits, that our national programs reflect the need and the evolution of what people need in the communications marketplace.

We're complementing this with several other programs to help close the digital divide and one of those is our Comcast lift zones where we've committed a multiyear program to having more than 1,000 lift zones in communities nationwide that focus on very specific consumer needs. So whether it's focused on youth and education or we're talking about helping bring veterans into the workforce or we're looking on workforce issues for people with disabilities.

These are very important and you'll see Comcast lift zones across our 39-state footprint. Our Internet Essentials partnership program, where we are constantly working with and talking with community partners, many of which I assume that HUD local organizations and agencies are working with on the ground.

We have more than 7,000 partners -- 12,000 partners nationally that are working with us on Internet Essentials to close the digital divide providing training in language for people oftentimes

creating content that will help for that conversation about getting online and the importance of having Internet in the home.

One interesting partnership that we launched this year with the Hispanic Technology and Telecommunications partnership was EBB Para Mi, which is a Spanish language resource bank to help communities understand the value of signing up for the EBB program, but also helping them work through and walk through the steps of getting signed up and then our research.

You know, we've been able to be doing this for 10 years, we've committed over \$1 billion to this over time and this is something where we've been able to look back and learn from our experience but also create a body of research to help inform others how best to close the digital divide. We can go to the next slide.

And here one of the things I wanted to share with you all, I know that several of the folks on this call, again, are working at the front lines.

And so whether it's just Common Sense Media, OATS, which is a part of AARP, PsychArmor, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, right, we are very committed to building out our programs and getting the word out about not just the value of EBB, but all of our broadband adoption programs with partners, whoever is interested and we've invested a ton of media and advertising dollars into this and we hope that if you're working with any of these partners, you will consider yourself part of Comcast and we're always willing to have those conversations and really expand access to these programs nationwide.

You can go to the next slide. I think that's it. Thank you so much, everyone and I'm happy to answer any questions you have.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much. That was fantastic. All right. Next, as we move right along, it's my pleasure to introduce Jennifer Earnest with Cox. Jen serves as director for accessibility and digital inclusion for Cox in Atlanta, Georgia and is responsible for its low-income broadband and accessibility programs and with that, I'll turn it over to you, Jen. Thank you so much.

Jennifer Earnest: Thank you. And I [inaudible] participants and thanks to both ConnectHome and HUD for hosting this important discussion. We're thrilled to be able to participate on the topic of broadband affordability as well as our participation in EBB and talk about what Cox is doing in the area of digital inclusion.

So really, this crisis, which is what it is, takes a consortium of organizations and community partners, like you all, in order to truly make a difference. Next slide, please. So as we've talked about, there has been significant progress over the last decade with Internet adoption, but it remains a major challenge for low-income families across the United States.

As we all learned last year, an Internet connection is no longer a luxury. COVID turned the homework gap into the education gap. So now more than ever the digital divide means millions of students will be left behind. So the mission of Connect 2 Compete is to close the digital divide

and ensure that all children are able to reach their full potential in life by providing low-income families with a fast, reliable and affordable Internet connection.

Next slide, please. So Cox has been offering a low-income Internet program in some form for nearly two decades. C2C is a voluntary initiative targeting low-income families with school-aged children and serves as our company's lead corporate social responsibility program. So since 2012, we've connected over 850,000 people and these are people who otherwise would not have had access.

We know through surveys that 61 percent of C2C customers have never had Internet before and the primary reason cited being cost.

So there are 50 million school-aged children nationwide and more than 15 million of them are lacking regular access and/or a device capable of online learning. So last year Cox signed the K-12 Bridge to Broadband program, a partnership between cable companies and nonprofit EducationSuperHighway and we committed \$60 million to the program over the next year.

Next slide, please. So Connect 2 Compete, eligible families can receive high-speed Internet service for \$9.95 a month. There are no deposits, no activation fees, no contracts and no price increases.

It also includes free installation, a WiFi modem with the service, access to over 500,000 nationwide WiFi hotspots as well as, Comcast mentioned, digital literacy being so, so important in this area, so we offer free tools and online resources to improve digital literacy for students and their families via our Cox Digital Academy and the programs available to families with at least one K-12 student in the household as well as those who participate in a government subsidy, such as free/reduced school lunch through the National School Lunch program, SNAP, TANF and public housing as well.

Our primary outreach and what we found to be the most effective for driving awareness of the program is grassroots effort. So a lot of the issues that we've cited for broadband adoption lack of trust can be alleviated by having those trusted partners communicating about programs like this. So our local teams work directly with schools, nonprofits and community organizations to build the awareness and to help connect families directly.

Next slide, please. Yes, thank you. So as part of a survey that we did recently, overwhelmingly families agree that Connect 2 Compete makes it easier to communicate with teachers in a school and that parent-student involvement is really critical, helping students get higher grades, making students more interested in school work and giving them a leg up in graduation.

So the opportunity of having Internet access at home is among the greatest benefits, obviously. No longer do families have to walk a mile to get Internet access, we've heard stories from some of our customers, or as we saw pictures last year of students sitting in fast food parking lots trying to get connections.

Next slide, please. So our participation in EBB were using our own alternative verification process. So unlike the other providers who have presented thus far they're using the National Verifier, we're using our own qualification methods to quickly and easily allow customers to prove their identity and qualify for the program.

So for customers who are identified in low-income areas and our Connect 2 Compete customers, it's as simple as opting in. Other customers can enter a mobile phone number, a date of birth and upload a government -- or upload a government ID and then if needed, upload the supporting documentation that proves their eligibility in one of the qualifying EBB programs.

It's really a quick and easy process and most customers receive notification that they're qualified within minutes and then we formally enroll them in the government database. So Cox is one of the few participating providers who is offering the \$100 computer discount and we're proud to be partnering with PCs for People and other nonprofit device refurbishers to offer this benefit.

So once a customer successfully enrolls, they receive an email with a link to purchase and that allows them to get a desktop from \$25 after the \$100 discount, a Chromebook from \$11 and other laptops up to \$49.99 for the customer contribution. And then once a customer's enrolled, they'll see the EBB credit on their bill.

We're allowing customers the option of choosing the Internet plan that works best for them. Many of them are applying it to the service that they already have and at the conclusion of the program, obviously, customers are responsible for their regular rate, but they can cancel at any time.

So outreach, we are -- very similarly with Connect 2 Compete, we've created a toolkit for our local teams and local organizations to help spread the word and that's available in both English and Spanish and that allows those organizations, it has a QR code, to easily transfer to the application so they can get their constituents signed up quickly and easily.

So the digital divide is larger than any of us can conquer alone. It really takes public-private partnerships to be successful. So we've partnered with organizations across the country who -- and this is a sample of them who share a similar vision in bridging the digital divide. So our focus is on four pillars with access being our core, devices, digital literacy and then thought leadership and policy.

So our ConnectHome partnership, which we launched a pilot in 2015 and expanded nationally shortly thereafter, continues to be a focus for providing Internet for families living in public housing. Next slide, please. So last year we developed a partnership program to work with schools, local governments and nonprofits to help accelerate Internet adoption.

So we partner with these organizations to identify students who are in need of an Internet connection and then work with them to subsidize a number of students and families' in-home Internet. So it's a program that's flexible as students move in and out of the program. From a school perspective, there's no minimum term agreement.

So we're really proud of this work and last year we worked with a number of organizations within our footprint to get students connected during COVID and one of those was a 2020/2021 connecting kids through the Nevada Public-Private Partnership ensuring that all students across the state of Nevada had equal access to virtual learning tools and Clark County School District being one of the top 10 school districts in the country, we were able to help partner with them to get 100 percent of those students connected for online learning during COVID.

And finally, we're thrilled to announce our all-new partner portal. So finding that partners who share a similar mission in digital equity we have a holistic solution that provides education, opportunities to engage and active organizations who want to champion the same mission. So the portal has a custom playbook for how to generate awareness, identify opportunities to help and a place for partners to opt in.

So it also has all the collateral that they need to help spread the word. So for more information on that, it's cox.com/partner.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much, Jen, that was great information, we really appreciate it. I'm learning a lot. So now I'd like to turn over the presentation to Emily Hoel who is the director of strategic initiatives for PCs for People and oversees the EBB program and partnership. Emily.

Emily Hoel: Good afternoon, everyone. Thanks so much for having us all. It's great to be following Cox Communications, because we are partnering so closely with them and as Jen mentioned, it takes a lot of collaboration and support between us all to make some of these really important initiatives happen.

So PCs for People is a national nonprofit organization that has really been working since 1998 on bridging the digital divide. We have a multi-phased approach where we focus on getting technology and Internet and digital literacy skills into the hands of folks who need it the most and we do it 60,000 computers at low cost every year for folks, again, around the country, we have local branches in 7 locations and then you can also purchase online anywhere in the country and Puerto Rico.

So just briefly to talk about our model as a whole before we get into EBB, we -- and to do a plug if anyone out there if this makes sense to the company you're working with. So we work with corporations and government groups to collect and professionally refurbish end-of-life technology that you all may have.

So we will pick up that technology, securely remove the data, we're certified in all data wiping procedures, and then refurbish, put those devices as good as new and get them back out into the community for low cost and many times for free for families. So we are constantly looking for new sources of new technology.

So if that is something that lights a fire in you in this conversation, please reach out to me. So once we've got those items collected and refurbished and ready to go back out, we work directly

with school groups, with other nonprofits and just folks that come into our stores and are eligible for our services, we do income qualifications.

Or if you're receiving any sort of government benefit or if your children are receiving free and reduced lunch, we're able to get you qualified and get you a low-cost device. And lastly, we have digital literacy programs as well and just again, making sure, right, that we're covering all the bases, so not just access to the physical goods, but that support to use devices and make sure that folks are making the most out of the opportunity.

And perfect, thank you, you're good on the slides. So for EBB, again, we're offering low-cost Internet and computers all the time, whether anyone applies to EBB or is eligible for EBB or not. So if you do know anyone that is just interested in low-cost computers, we always have those on our site and would love to support folks with that.

Now, specifically with EBB, we do also have an alternative eligibility process, as other folks have mentioned, that does make it a little bit easier to get enrolled. Since we are constantly doing eligibility for our own programs, it was very easy to be approved for the alternative eligibility with EBB and we are happy to do that.

So folks can go onto our website, ebb.pcsrefurbished.com, agree to all of the EBB terms and then get enrolled and start making purchases. So we are offering Internet through EBB and devices. So when you first sign up for the Internet, you're going to get one of our hotspots that is supported through the Sprint network and we have a few different models, but essentially, if you're purchasing the hotspot with EBB, it'll end up being between \$10 and \$20.

The monthly fee, which is normally \$15, will be waived. The discount will cover the entire monthly fee and there are no contracts, it's a month in advance. Each month folks would get on and say we want -- they want to receive the EBB benefit again for \$0 and they'd be able to continue doing that as long as the program is running.

For anyone who already has a hotspot and just wants the monthly rate for free, you can do that as well. And then we have devices available, desktops and laptops. Laptops go pretty fast, but we do have desktops available on an ongoing basis. And I think that's pretty much it. Really encourage folks to check us out on ebb.pcsrefurbished.com for more information.

Check -- we have an area to see if our hotspot coverage works for your area. The hotspot coverage is slightly different than a traditional Internet service. So we do want everyone to check and make sure that they're going to have good coverage in their area and that is directly on the page where you view the products for the hotspot.

And you may hear of PCs for People offering devices with other partners, such as Cox Communications. We're proud to be doing that and to be able to support getting devices to as many people as possible. And I'll turn it over to our next speaker.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much, Emily, that was fantastic. Now I'm pleased to introduce Virginia Lam Abrams. Virginia is the senior vice president of Government Affairs and Strategic Advancement for Starry, Inc.

In her role at the company, Virginia is responsible for leading government affairs, communications and Starry Connect, which is the company's digital equity program focused on developing partnerships with public and affordable housing owners to deliver ultra-low-cost Internet solutions to the residents. Virginia.

Virginia Lam Abrams: Thank you, Dina, for that introduction and thank you to Caila and Peggy and the rest of the HUD team for inviting Starry to participate. We're really proud to be a part of the ConnectHomeUSA family and I just want to just take a quick second to commend all of the participating providers on today's call.

I think that as everyone has pointed out, this last year and a half has been an exceedingly tough time for so many different reasons and the fact that all providers are working together in coordination with the FCC and our other federal partners to make sure that we get connectivity to where it's needed most, I think, is really a big silver lining of how everyone is really banding together.

So I just wanted to take a minute to commend everyone. If we could go to the next slide, please. For those of you who are not familiar with Starry, we are a hybrid fiber wireless Internet service provider that today is operating in five major metropolitan areas, including Boston, New York, Washington, D.C., Denver and Los Angeles.

We have a Starry Connect program, which is our specialized digital equity program that partners specifically with public and affordable housing owners to provide access to an ultra-low-cost \$15 a month 30 megabits symmetrical broadband plan for residents.

The reason this is unique is that we work with the housing owners to provide blanket eligibility across your entire housing community and we do not require credit checks or other eligibility criteria for residents to participate and gain access to this plan and that's really important, because when a participating housing community resident tries to sign up for service, you automatically get served with the option to sign up for our \$15 plan, which is an all-inclusive number that includes equipment, no data caps, no long-term contracts.

There is no other gating factor for residents and we have found that to be incredibly effective in terms of increasing broadband adoption rates in the communities that we partner with. We announced and launched this program in late 2018 and as of the beginning of this year, today have more than 30,000 units of public and affordable housing that are eligible in participating in our Starry Connect program.

So it's something that we're incredibly proud of. It's really been made possible by many of the people who are on this call today, because I know we have a lot of our partner communities on the call today and I'm just really grateful that this has been a great partnership that we're super excited about.

So if we can go to the next slide, we're going to focus specifically on Starry's participation in the Emergency Broadband Benefit. Starry was qualified under the FCC's alternative verification program, which provides for all eligible Starry Connect partner communities and their residents to automatically and immediately qualify for the EBB benefit.

This, as other speakers have pointed out, makes it really easy for your residents, if you are part of our Starry Connect program, to immediately gain access to the EBB program. Today all of Starry's broadband plans are eligible for reimbursement under the EBB program and today in our Connect communities, we offer a \$15 plan, a \$30 plan and a \$50 plan.

All of those are eligible for reimbursement. If you go to the next slide, so our goal, really at the outset, when May 12th came around, which was the kickoff date for the Emergency Broadband Benefit, we started with a very targeted email campaign to our eligible current subscribers that were living in our Connect communities.

We sent them emails a week before May 12th to let them know that the EBB benefit was available to them and on May 12th, we followed up with an additional email that allowed them a one-click opt-in to the EBB. We have found huge success with this very hyper-targeted email campaign to get folks signed up.

In the summer, we will be targeting field campaigns to encourage participation from new subscribers. So today, and I'm sorry this date is a little bit out of date, 90 percent of our EBB participants were current subscribers and 10 percent are new subscribers. We believe that when we kick off our field marketing campaigns to encourage more people to sign up for the EBB benefit, that that ratio is really going to become a little bit more balanced in terms of new subscribers versus existing subscribers.

As you all know, the goal with the EBB was to really enable and alleviate the cost of broadband for families that were really struggling during the pandemic, but another point of it was really to enable families that didn't currently have broadband or have access to broadband that they could then afford it by using this benefit.

So the next thing we did was make sure that our sign-up flow was super easy; right? We want to make sure that we're not putting any barriers in front of subscribers to sign up. So I'm going to take you very quickly through what our EBB sign-up flow looks like for a new subscriber and we can go to the next slide.

So when you live in a Starry Connect community and you go and sign up for service, you're going to get served these three options for plans and as a subscriber, you can choose which plan best fits your household needs. So our Starry Connect plan is \$15 a month for 30 megabits symmetrical service.

We have our Starry basic plan, which is \$30 a month and then our standard Starry Internet plan, which is \$50 a month. And I see that there was, in the chat box, a question about why symmetrical. The reason why we really feel symmetrical is important is obviously, we're doing

things like videoconferencing where you really need robust upload capacity as well as download capacity to have a seamless experience.

So we very much believe that having a symmetrical or at least near symmetrical connection is really important and we want to make sure that all of our families, including those families that live in public and affordable housing, have access to that high-quality network connection. So you go to the page, you select plan, then we go to the next slide and then it says, thank you for signing up and now you can enroll in the EBB program.

You click on that big orange button that says, enroll now. And we can go to the next slide and it will take you to an explanation about the Emergency Broadband Benefit.

Well, we're really clear that this is a federal program of which we do not know how long it will last and I think that for many providers, we've been on a lot of different policy conversations, this has been the most challenging, because we want our customers to have a great experience and to be fully transparent about the benefit they're receiving and the fact that we actually don't know how long the benefit will last.

And so we tried to, as much as possible, in plain language communicate that it is a short-term benefit that as soon as we know when the benefit will end, we will do everything in our power to communicate and communicate often with folks what that next step will be to either continue service, to modify service or to cancel service if they wish.

So if we go to the next page, then we ask for the information that we are required to supply to USAC, which includes your date of birth and then also affirmative consent, again, that the customer understands all of the different elements to the EBB and once they've put in their date of birth, they affirmatively consent, then they click the submit button and then we're all done.

So that is Starry's participation in the EBB. Thank you all so much, I look forward to your questions.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much, Virginia, that was fantastic. All right. In case you all didn't notice, we went in alphabetical order. So T-Mobile is certainly last but definitely not least. So it gives me great pleasure to introduce, we have two speakers today from T-Mobile, David Bezzant and Dr. Angela Hemingway. Let me introduce them.

David is the vice president of T-Mobile for Government and National Public Sector Organizations. He oversees direct sales and solutions for both federal and state and local government and K-12 and publicly-funded higher education. And Dr. Hemingway is an educational advisor at T-Mobile and is leading the EBB program and with that, I'll turn it over to both of you and thank you so much.

David Bezzant: Hi, Dina. Thanks so much. Can you hear me okay?

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Perfectly.

David Bezzant: Okay. Wonderful. By the way, Dr. Hemingway is absolutely the person to pay attention to in this presentation, she definitely knows what she's doing, but it's so great to be on with all of you. We at T-Mobile want to thank HUD and the leadership team for hosting important venues like this.

And as you heard from the other great communications providers, there's some really nice options to be able to get help for families and communities. It's our opinion that HUD and each one of you that are leading your community with your local housing community are doing some of the most important work to ensure that Americans have affordable housing and we just want to tell you thank you for that.

You know, the home is the center of where safety should happen and where our regrouping and collaboration should happen and we think it's the number one element. So at T-Mobile, it's really a pleasure to be a small part of your powerful community engagement and we hope that the things that we've put together for the Emergency Broadband Benefit are easy to follow and easy to administer and we'll walk you through some of those flowcharts.

If you're listening, you may know T-Mobile -- you may know us for our award-winning 5G footprint. You may be familiar with our commitment to bridging the digital divide with Project 10Million and by the way, that is 10 million households connected and a \$10.8 billion commitment for the next 10 years to the K-12 community in which 3 million households are already signed up and enrolled for that program in just 1 year.

So we're really proud of that effort to help bridge the digital divide. It's really commendable, as was stated earlier, to see federal leadership putting individuals first and to making tremendous efforts to bridge the digital divide and we notice it at T-Mobile and we commend each of you for your work that has been done there.

As I talked about, our goal, when we looked at this, was to try and make these programs easy to administer the broadband benefit to your community. And so if we can go to the next slide, let's show what that looks like. T-Mobile for Government has two plans, both of these plans are free to the end user and these plans are free to the housing authority.

Now, the housing authority is an element you may not have heard in some of the prior presentations, but T-Mobile wrote the Federal Communications Commission and received approval to allow housing authorities and other government agencies to make bulk arrangements on behalf of your residents and to say that differently, we would have the ability to send you lump inventory of either hotspots or of tablets, whatever inventory you select or would have available, to be able to hand that inventory out locally to your communities.

We try and keep those in ranges of 250 at a time, meaning that if you've got 250 and you've then handed those out, if you needed 250 more, we would have them for you very quickly if that was of interest to you, but it helps with onsite delivery and onsite implementation of these programs and again, our focus was ease of point or ease of delivery.

We offer two different plan choices and those two different plan choices, they both come with unlimited connectivity, however, the hotspot comes with 10 GB of T-Mobile's highest-speed broadband connectivity and the tablet plan comes with 20 GB of our highest-speed broadband connectivity and then otherwise performs at our average speeds within the T-Mobile infrastructure.

One thing that's different than you may have heard in some of the other conversations is T-Mobile is paying for the hotspot and/or the tablet. So the inventory is included and that is something we're paying for.

It's worth noting that I think many of you are familiar with the Emergency Broadband Benefit, but if we had asked for a resident to pay \$10 or if we had asked for that to be collected from the end individual, we could go and collect \$100 back on equipment for these types of benefits and as was stated earlier, people don't know how long these programs are going to last or what that looks like.

This is a true contribution from T-Mobile to try and do our part to help bridge the digital divide by taking and covering the cost of that hardware with no money to have to be collected from each individual. And so it makes it literally completely free for someone who needed help to get either a hotspot or a tablet for them and that's a very meaningful contribution from us that we hope would make this easier.

And in terms of access across the U.S., if we could go to the next slide, we kind of laughed internally, by the way, with this map and I don't know if there's an ability to click on the map and have it like fill out, but it looks like we have zero coverage and it looks like the United States has a blackout.

So we probably could've used a different image for that, but if the animation would work or if there's another spacebar that can be clicked, you'll see that T-Mobile covers 99 percent of Americans with 4G/LTE and that's 327 million households and we cover 215 million Americans, by the way, which is an incredibly large amount with 5G infrastructure as well.

And so it looks like the automation's not working on our map and we'll be happy to make sure that we email you out and get you access or a copy of that infrastructure. We have teams all over the United States literally in every single one of your communities who can come out, come onsite and help you with these programs locally. What I'd love to do is I'd love to pull in Dr. Hemingway.

Dr. Hemingway recently joined our team from the Idaho Governor's Office and is an absolute expert in helping bridge the digital divide in instituting programs that help digital equity throughout the United States. And so if we could go to the next slide, Dr. Hemingway, we'd love to hear from you on how these flowcharts work and what this would look like for a housing authority who wanted to help their local community with T-Mobile.

Dr. Angela Hemingway: Well, thank you so much, Dave. I really appreciate the introduction and certainly, I think, to reiterate the fact that these devices are new and they're no-cost devices

that we provide to the housing authority. We recognize this is a partnership, we recognize that you know your community way better than we do, therefore, partnering with us would allow for the distribution of these devices and more successful end users, your residents, actually enrolling in these programs.

So we're currently engaging in these housing authorities across the United States, multiple meetings Dave and I are on each day, and we kind of walk them through this flowchart so you can see the commitment from the end user and then the commitment from the government agency in being our partner.

So as we've already discussed, kind of that top row there is the end user. So as was explained earlier, the end user is registering with the National Verifier and then the second step is the end user is selecting their carrier. So selecting T-Mobile.

Well, in partnership with the government agency, you'll see down on that second row that the government agency, the housing authority, would partner with us here at T-Mobile, we would sign an agreement and as Dave indicated, send devices that you need for your community to be handed out to your community.

We've worked with some fabulous housing authorities that are setting up different stations. So they're going to go to a particular residence, housing units, and actually help the end users get through the National Verifier and then register using the T-Mobile form and then you can see there at the end of the flowchart that's when the end user would receive a device, either a tablet or a hotspot, again, that's a no-cost device, we don't want to collect that subsidy from the end user, we know that that could certainly eliminate a number of individuals that would be willing and able to participate.

So we've got a couple more slides that kind of break this down a little more slowly here. So again, in partnership with housing authorities, you'd see that you would be supporting the end user in working them through this process, registering through the National Verifier, it would be the housing authority that would be the recipient of the tablets or hotspots, it would be the housing authority that would partner with, again, the end user to support them as they enrolled in the EBB program through T-Mobile and then you'd be the one ultimately providing them the device.

So they would interface with you directly and get that support from you ensuring that they're completing those programs. And so then the next slide, the commitments from the end user, this is one we've already -- you've already seen on the next slide, again, the end user needing to register for the National Verifier and the end user needing to select their carrier and then receiving a device.

So Dave, I didn't know if you wanted to add a little bit more about those devices or what might happen after EBB ends?

David Bezzant: Well, I think that it would be worth noting that the devices belong to the end user. And so they're the property of the end user or they're the property of the housing authority

if you wanted to, for any reason, take ownership of those devices. T-Mobile will be providing a 60-day winddown notice assuming that the program does not receive additional funding or is not extended in any way.

So we hope this is really friendly for folks where there's no money out of pocket, it's easy access for them and we hope that it would be easy for you to administer it if you wanted to host any sort of event or have people come in and get instant gratification within inventory or product. Dr. Hemingway, did I miss anything that was important to you?

Dr. Angela Hemingway: Yeah. I was just going to add as we've been working with housing authorities, as Dave mentioned, you could -- could you go back two slides to the flowchart for me, if that's possible? Perfect. So once you receive those devices, before you hand them out to your residents, perhaps you would like those devices returned to you when the program ends.

So one housing authority, in particular, is going to ask that these chosen hotspots be returned and they actually, when EBB ends, are going to place one hotspot in each unit so that when a new family moves in, they will have a plan. So again, EBB ends, they're going to transition them to a different plan ensuring that each family that moves into the unit actually has a unit.

The other advantage of those hotspots or tablets on our network is they're very mobile and as we know, certain communities have residents that may be moving between homes or perhaps homeless. And so having that mobility is kind of another advantage that we talk about when we're working with housing authorities.

However, if you choose to provide that device to the end user, it would become the device for that end user. So you would have a lot of options on what you would like to do with that particular device and what you would like to happen to that device and the service plan when EBB ends. And I think we have just one final slide, Dave.

David Bezzant: Yeah. Hey, there was just one question that came in and I'll just hit it while it came up, but one of the questions was, can we explain that the program truly is free? The program truly is free. The way that essentially it works is that the Federal Communications Commission, or the FCC, has a program through USAC that provides the reimbursement back to the communications company.

And so if a housing authority took on one of these programs and then administered it, it's no cost to them and certainly no cost to the user, there's no cost for the equipment. And the USAC organization, or FCC through the approval, is essentially paying that bill or that invoice on behalf of them.

There is no point or situation that we would either build the housing authority or the end resident once the program ended unless someone had opted to connect service then wanted to do something outside of the Emergency Broadband plan. So I hope that that helps them. If they do Q&A, we'd be more than happy to. And just one other quick note from Daniel, thank you in Tennessee.

It sounds like we'd want to connect with you and take a look if there was coverage in your area. I really appreciate the note over and it was noticed. Dr. Hemingway, if you want to hit that last slide.

Dr. Angela Hemingway: Yeah. Thank you so much. So when you receive the slide deck, you'll be able to find our landing page and our enrollment form and then of course, we've got contact information for Andy who will be able to get you directed to the proper support system and we really would love if you would reach out to us, we would love to be your partner in bringing about this digital equity through the EBB program.

So again, thank you so much, we appreciate you sticking around with us through the presentation. And back to the host.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you so much. I think all six of you have done an incredible -- have rendered an incredible service by being with us today and I couldn't help but notice that we got almost to 600 participants, 598. We didn't bridge that ceiling, but still a very remarkable size. So thank you for sharing such great information. I'm going to check with Caila to see what questions we have for our panelists.

Caila Prendergast: Thanks, Dina. And yeah, we'll dive right in, there's been quite a few coming in. So hopefully we have time to get through a good bit of them. So I think this question was directed at Comcast, but I think it's kind of just more a general question, if someone signs up for regular Internet with EBB and then when the EBB benefit ends, is the requirement of not having regular Comcast Internet to qualify for Internet Essentials waived?

Jackie Puente: Hi. Happy to take this question. Yeah. So if you are on our Internet Essentials program and you take the benefit, when the benefit expires, you can go back to Internet Essentials. If you are a new customer who has signed up for service with the Emergency Broadband Benefit regardless of the tier service that you've selected, we will make the Internet Essentials offer available to you if you qualify for Internet Essentials.

So I think particularly for this audience where our folks are in public housing and using the public assistance programs, Internet Essentials would be available for those customers.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Thanks, Jackie. And this is just a broad question, is the program open to low-income families residing in a tax credit or tax-exempt bond property? Dina, I don't know if you want to touch on that one.

Jackie Puente: I believe so. Our -- I will double-check and get back to you on that. I believe so. Anybody who is living in HUD, HUD's programs, public assistance housing, the Internet Essentials program is available to them. So I believe that counts, I will double-check.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Yeah. And I'm not sure about those particular housing categories, but if the residents apply for other types of -- you know, if they participate in other programs that make them eligible, and they very well may, like Medicaid, for example, then they could be eligible.

Jackie Puente: Right. Exactly. Or the National School Lunch Program, for example. If the family is with the National School Lunch Program, veterans, obviously, the senior programs as well for aging individuals, all of those would help reinforce the qualifications.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Exactly. Yeah. So housing doesn't have to be the only [inaudible] criteria.

Jackie Puente: Correct. And I've just been informed, yes, that is correct that the tax-exempt programs qualify as well.

Caila Prendergast: Great. Thanks. I think kind of while I move into these -- the rest of these questions we're getting a lot of questions about availability in certain areas. If any of the ISPs on the line today have a quick link that they can just drop in the chat to where folks can find that information online, I think that would be helpful.

And then to all those questions that are asking about the slides, the slides were sent around to all registrants before the presentation and they'll be sent around again tomorrow. So you will have all this information, no worries there. And this is a question for all the ISPs, do you have any materials available in Burmese?

David Bezzant: Hey, this is Dave from T-Mobile. I'm not familiar one way or the other, but I'd be happy to take a look into that and get back to the group and publish it back out if we do.

Caila Prendergast: Great. Thanks, David. Any others aware of any materials in Burmese?

Jovan Hicks: This is Jovan from AT&T. We have -- we offer our Access from AT&T several pieces of collateral in seven different languages. I don't believe that's one, but we may be able to provide some information. So if you want to connect, then we may be able to help you out there.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Thanks.

Jackie Puente: And this is Jackie from Comcast [inaudible] Internet Essentials. We have our information available in 15 different languages. I am not clear if it's in Burmese, but that is a recommendation we can take back and I would highly recommend if you look at our Internet Essentials site, which also has all of the EBB information on it, several of the partners that we work with do work in the Burmese community.

So I'm sure that they can help do that, but we're happy to take that information back and work on that.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Thanks so much. So Dina, I think this is a question for you, to partner with an ISP, does a PHA have to go through the procurement process?

Dina Lehmann-Kim: I think it would depend on which type of Internet provider you go through and I'll turn it over to them, actually, because they've done this, I have not. So I'll ask T-Mobile and Starry and others if they'd like to comment on that question.

David Bezzant: Hey, this is Dave from T-Mobile and typically, it depends on what your local jurisdiction is and what you're normally doing, but we have a three-page document that has the flow-down terms of the Federal Communications requirement and that's the only thing that we ask for and the reason that we have that is it's for information sharing.

You're essentially not buying anything, but what you're doing is administering the program. It's not like it's something that's going to benefit the housing authority directly. This is something that is going to benefit the end resident. So we have not seen any sort of effort around professional procurement but rather very organized and very thoughtful processes about how to host events, how to get people in, how to help them enroll and go forward.

But if you do happen to have a contract that's either a state contract or an overarching agreement, like NASPO, we're happy to work with any of those participating addendums or infrastructures for someone if needed.

Virginia Lam Abrams: And this is Virginia from Starry. Dina's response was correct, it's a little bit of both and to Dave's point, it really depends on the local jurisdiction that you're in.

We work with Public Housing Authorities where we're able to work directly with them to bring Starry's service to their communities and in other instances where state requires the PHA to go through a procurement process through an RFP process, and that's not -- and that is just a requirement of the state, we go through that RFP process as well.

So really, it just depends on the local jurisdiction and the rules that are governing -- the state rules that may apply to the PHA.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Great. Thanks. Anybody else have anything to add, any of the other ISPs? All right. Caila, back to you.

Caila Prendergast: Thank you. Do any of the programs have materials available to assist senior citizens who don't have kids but may still qualify due to their limited income, such as social security?

Dave Bezzant: Yeah. This is Dave from T-Mobile. Certainly, the Emergency Broadband Benefit program includes people who are under the poverty line and they're -- you know, regardless of their age, by the way, and certainly, senior citizens would qualify for that measurement.

Also, it may be worth noting that PELL-eligible students who are in the higher education systems are also eligible in addition to families who have free and reduced lunch in the K-12 space and residents who live in Section 8 housing. And so there's a number of different methods that are available to help each one of these families.

I believe that the EBB program is now in its first 30 days. And so there's plenty of funding left and while the numbers are raising and while there's a lot of excitement, there's still a lot of work to do to help each one of these populations.

Jackie Puente: Yeah. This is Jackie from Comcast, I'll add in. This is a commentary and feedback that we heard early on and we know -- we knew early on that this was an area that we really needed to focus our expansion. So we have expanded into this space and we work with a number of program partners, because this, in many situation, is a very difficult to reach community there, they have to live most of their lives without broadband; right?

So getting them to connect and see the value and how it really benefits them is a challenge. So we work with various partners across the country and for example, OATS, which is in New York City with AARP, they've done work in Upstate New York. We've done work with the National Urban League, with UnidosUS, for example, helping to get seniors online and really, we found that it's been --

You know, we can tell them about the program, they learn about the programs through so many different ways, but oftentimes it takes that third party or that local housing organizer to help really bring them on and help give them the digital skill-up that they need to be able to connect and use the product at home.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Anybody else want to chime in? Okay. So PCs for People, we got a few questions about your footprint and if it's nationwide or if you could provide a link, I'm not sure if you already did in the chat, but just wanted to plug that.

Emily Hoel: Yeah. I will provide a link. So it is generally, yes, all 50 states, but it also gets a little bit more specific based on the different areas that people are in. So I will put a link in, but essentially, you can put in your address and zip code and it will tell you about the coverage in that area.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Great. Thanks. So this is a question that came in for Starry, when I have referred residents to Starry for an EBB application, they are then referred back to me. Is there any particular point of contact that I can connect residents with in the Denver area?

Virginia Lam Abrams: That should not have been the case. So I apologize to whomever was unfortunately redirected. So for anyone who's currently living in a Starry Connect community that would like to sign up that is a current subscriber and if they lost that email link that they receive, they can reach out to our customer support team at support@starry.com and our support team can resend the link for them to enroll in and opt into the program.

For new subscribers, the sign-up flow is just as simple as we had laid out in the presentation where folks, you go to the website, you sign up for service, you choose a plan and then you have to [inaudible] that at the end of signing up for service, that each individual must click the enroll now, because it must be an affirmative enrollment.

We can't automatically enroll subscribers, they have to choose to enroll and go through that flow. But if there are any questions or concerns, you can reach out to me directly and I'll make sure that you get connected with our customer care team so then any resident concerns or questions are answered, but our support team has been fully briefed and trained on how to sign folks up through -- for the EBB.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Thanks. So I see we're at time. So Dina, I'm going to ask kind of how you want to approach it, because we do have some questions left, quite a few, actually.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Okay. So let's see if our panelists can stay on for maybe another five minutes. Do you guys have time to do that? If not, then we can send the questions to you and send them back -- the responses back to the [inaudible].

Dave Bezzant: Dave from T-Mobile will hang in.

Female: [inaudible] is available.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Okay.

Virginia Lam Abrams: I can stay on as well, this is Virginia.

Jennifer Earnest: Sure. This is Jen, I can stay.

Jackie Puente: I'm happy to stay on as well.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Okay. Wonderful. So let's go for another five minutes and hopefully we get through with any questions.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Great. Thanks. So this is for T-Mobile, does the housing authority have to choose between tablets or hotspots or can we do a combination?

Dave Bezzant: Oh, yeah. Whatever works for each end user and resident, like it's all about customizing it to what people are most comfortable with.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. And follow-up, can they keep the products after the EBB finishes?

Dave Bezzant: 100 percent, yeah. Like the device is theirs, it's their property and that's one of the biggest things that we, at T-Mobile, we're excited to help contribute and we're hoping that this creates a path forward for folks for longer-term success.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. Thank you. So next I'm going to try to bundle a few different questions that I saw come into more of a theme and this is for all who want to answer, what do you suggest that we do if there is no coverage in my area for multiple providers, specifically for rural areas?

Dave Bezzant: This is Dave from T-Mobile, if you guys don't mind me jumping in on that one. You know, it's a tough one, I saw some comments about people being in rural America and some of the most important connections need to happen in rural America and while I can't speak for other communications providers, one of the things that T-Mobile is committed to doing is trying to help build out rural infrastructure.

We have a commitment called 5G for All and we're investing \$45 billion in rural communities over the next 4 years and \$9 billion of that investment is happening now. And so if you let us know if there isn't connectivity in your area, we will make a diligent good faith effort to see if we can build it; you know?

And you see great companies like Starry and AT&T and Comcast and Cox and others here, I think many of these organizations have really deep commitments to expand connectivity and coverage wherever. And so I feel for you if you are in a space that nobody happens to cover, we would like to know if that is the case and see what we couldn't do about it.

Jovan Hicks: This is Jovan from AT&T. I'll also mention that we are working closely and collaboratively with the government, our industries and customers to expand and enhance our networks to reach rural areas. One of the avenues -- the channels that we've used is the Connect America Fund, or CAF II, is how it's abbreviated, initiative.

We are well on our way to offering Internet service to over 1.1 million additional rural homes and small businesses by -- our goal was by the end of 2020. I think we are pushing into 2021. So we're also developing our fixed wireless technology among other technologies that are being built out in those areas.

So we are actively working to address that issue. And also, I'll mention we also are working to better serve our public safety folks there, our FirstNet Communications platform, and by building more than, I think it's 1,000 new sites, including rural areas where public safety stakeholders are identified we will be addressing some of the connectivity issues for first responders as well.

Virginia Lam Abrams: I just wanted to quickly chime into this, Jovan and Dave. Starry also participated in the FCC's Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, which is, I guess, the successor auction to CAF II, which provided funding to, again, build out connectivity to unserved and unconnected areas across the United States.

We were successful in that auction which concluded because of COVID time. It was not last year, it was the year before last -- or it was last year and it will be -- and we'll continue to go through the long-form process before that actually gets kicked off in terms of providers starting to build out their networks to these communities, but we were very excited to participate, because it will allow us to continue to further extend our network today, which is in the urban, [inaudible], suburban areas of our communities and extended out to unserved more rural communities.

So I -- as everyone -- as all the other providers on this call, we're all working towards trying to find innovative and cost effective ways to really reach areas that today do not have satisfactory connectivity, if they have any connectivity at all.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. So next question is about why there are varying restrictions with some carriers and being able to apply on their smartphones. Many of my residents have never been trained to use a tablet, laptop, PC or otherwise and as such, participants might incur other

expenses, including antivirus protection and wouldn't be more able to stay on the manipulation of sorts.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Caila, is the question asking about how people can apply using a smartphone or [inaudible] --

Caila Prendergast: I think it's more kind of why those restrictions exist. I guess, yeah, there was some issues with applying for smartphones for the -- in the past.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Oh, applying for smartphones. Oh, I see. I'm not sure, I don't have an answer to that.

Dave Bezzant: I'm going to stab at that and say that I believe that the FCC specified this as broadband and the smartphone program is typically referred to as lifeline where that's been an open and sustained program. And so I believe that that may be why there's a delineation, however, I can't speak for the variances, if certain organizations are offering one thing versus the next.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: That would make sense. Caila, maybe we can just take one more question and then we can wrap up for the day.

Caila Prendergast: Yeah. Thanks, Dina. So I think the final question is, and this is combining a lot of questions, there's been a lot of people wondering how to get in contact with someone for further questions to your organizations and just wanted to give each of you a chance to provide that information.

Dave Bezzant: This is David Bezzant. I'm going to -- in the chat and it's also in our presentation that has been sent out, we'll make sure that if you can take a look at that, that it's there, but I will put my email address as well in the chat here momentarily.

Jackie Puente: And this is Jackie Puente. I'm happy to do the same. You know, I'm happy to help connect you to the right person at Comcast in the local market if it's -- if you're having a challenge getting through to someone or answering additional questions.

Jovan Hicks: And this is Jovan from AT&T. I will provide our flyer to Dina, which includes all of the helpful links to our site as well as I will provide our Access from AT&T flyer, which will give you Access's specific information and I will include my email in the chat here as well.

Jennifer Earnest: This is Jen Earnest from Cox. I will also provide our EBB collateral and [inaudible] as well as my email address for any escalations that need to be handled.

Caila Prendergast: Okay. I think that is everybody. So with that, Dina, I'll pass it over to you to close us out.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Great. Thank you so much, Caila. Thank you to Caila and Mikayla [ph] for hosting the check and the questions and putting -- helping me put this together today and a huge

thanks to each of our ISP stakeholders for taking time today to be with us and for your ongoing support of ConnectHomeUSA and the communities that we serve through this program.

And with that, thank you, again, everyone for participating today and we look forward to working with you in the future. Thank you so much. Bye.

(END)