

# GOVERNOR GRETCHEN WHITMER

## EXPANDING BROADBAND ACCESS



Governor Whitmer believes every family and business in Michigan deserves access to a reliable, affordable high-speed internet connection that meets their needs. She wants to close Michigan's digital divide by expanding broadband, driving down costs, and boosting digital literacy. Broadband enables communities to develop, attract, and retain job-creating businesses. It expands economic opportunity for families, enhances educational experiences for students, and allows for remote access to key health care services. To ensure Michigan takes advantage of every opportunity for progress, the Governor launched the Connecting Michigan Task Force and the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office to coordinate the state's efforts. Together, these programs have leveraged millions in state and federal funds to give families and businesses access to broadband.

### BRINGING HIGH-SPEED INTERNET TO HOMES AND BUSINESSES

- Invested \$28 million through the Connecting Michigan Communities Grant Program in three rounds of grants to expand service to 18,900 homes and businesses.
- These investments are projected to have an annual economic benefit between \$31 and \$38.4 million.
- Signed the Broadband Expansion Act of Michigan, codifying the Connecting Michigan Communities Grant Program, a grant program to fill internet access gaps in underserved communities.
- Announced the Connecting Michigan Taskforce that will lead Michigan's efforts to strengthen and grow broadband infrastructure across Michigan.
- Signed an Executive Directive creating the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office to coordinate the state's broadband work and align the work with economic development opportunities.

### BRINGING FEDERAL FUNDS FOR BROADBAND TO MICHIGAN

- \$363 million through the FCC's Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Auction. Secured more funding per capita through than any other state.
- \$32.6 million through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's ReConnect Program.
- \$4.8 million through the FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Grant Program.
- \$25 million through the CARES Act to support distance learning and internet-capable device purchases for students in need and \$29.75 million to establish an educational equity fund during the COVID-19 pandemic.

***"In today's society, the fastest way to create an even playing field for all is access to high-speed internet. Broadband internet projects, along with additional infrastructure initiatives we are undertaking, will provide underserved communities in Michigan with high-speed internet service. This critical service is no longer a luxury but is a necessity that allows every Michigander to get a quality education and compete in the global economy."***

**- Governor Gretchen Whitmer**

