



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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JAMES F. KENNEY
Mayor

September 20, 2023

Dear President Biden,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and to advocate for the Biden Administration to take a leadership role in securing additional funding for this crucial initiative.

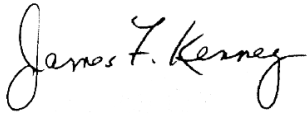
The City of Philadelphia has been at the forefront of efforts to ensure that all residents have access to affordable and reliable internet connectivity. Our PHLConnectED program has successfully connected over tens of thousands of households with free internet service, enabling our families to access vital resources for work, education, healthcare, and more. The Affordable Connectivity Program aligns seamlessly with our city's commitment to digital inclusion. This program has the potential to make a transformative impact on the lives of countless individuals and families across the United States. Just as our PHLConnectED program has benefited Philadelphia residents, the ACP will provide essential broadband access to households in need, regardless of whether they have school-aged children. The ACP program has also shown to be incredibly effective in a short period of time, with over 162,000 households here in Philadelphia receiving internet access through the program. It's not surprising that the program has been so successful, since it gets at the root cause of accessibility issues. In 2021, we conducted a Household Internet Assessment Survey to gather data about the state of digital access in Philadelphia. The number 1 reason identified by residents for not having high-speed service at home was affordability, and the ACP directly addresses that need.

The City of Philadelphia is dedicated to ensuring that no one is left behind in the digital age, and we are committed to assisting our residents in accessing these vital resources. We're in the midst of a robust outreach campaign to spread awareness about the ACP's benefits for every household in our city, and seeing great momentum. If we lose the funding for this program now, we'll not only lose out on the promise that this program could mean for so many families who aren't yet enrolled, but will also disillusion the households already enrolled when they lose this vital benefit. Furthermore, we're also in the midst of transitioning our PHLConnectED enrollees to ACP. So preserving ACP is critical not just for new and pending enrollees but also for the tens of thousands of K-12 families that PHLConnectED supported who currently have connectivity now through ACP, and are highly likely to lose it without ACP.

To further support the ACP's success, I urge the Biden Administration to take a leadership role in securing additional funding for this program. By bolstering the ACP, we can expand its reach and impact, enabling more families to bridge the digital divide and fully participate in our increasingly interconnected world. Your administration's commitment to equitable access to technology and connectivity will undoubtedly leave a lasting legacy, empowering individuals and communities for generations to come.

In closing, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your dedication to advancing equitable access to technology and digital resources. I believe that by working together, we can create a future where every individual has the opportunity to thrive and succeed in our rapidly evolving digital society. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to the positive impact that our collaboration can bring.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James F. Kenney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

James F. Kenney
Mayor