



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES & CARRIERS

Administration
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January 25, 2024

The Honorable Jacquelyn M. Baginski
House Committee on Innovation,
Internet & Technology
State House
Providence, R.I. 02903

Re: H 7157 – Amendment-Broadband Deployment and Investment Act

Dear Chair Baginski:

The Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (Division) recognizes the need for outreach to assist the public in applying for internet services through the federal Affordable Connectivity Program. We do believe, however, that the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation is far better situated with planning and resources to conduct this outreach than are we, as a regulatory body. Commerce has established a broadband program which, among other things, oversees federal funding including \$108.7 million from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) through the Broadband Equity access and Deployment (BEAD) Program. The agency also maintains the ConnectRI program which is focused on broadband access for all Rhode Islanders and employs a program manager to address the same goals referenced in this proposed legislation.

Sincerely,

Linda George, Esq.
Administrator, RI Division of Public Utilities and Carriers
Cc. Rep. John J. Lombardi
House Committee on Innovation, Internet, and Technology