



CHIEF OFFICERS OF STATE LIBRARY AGENCIES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COSLA Calls on NTIA to Partner with State Library Agencies in the Implementation of Federal Digital Equity Act Funding

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An historic amount of funding has been allocated for broadband by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). This funding will be distributed by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and be allocated to each state for local administration. The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) is pleased to share recent public comments submitted to the NTIA and geared at ensuring a strong national impact.

In its comments, COSLA calls on the NTIA to establish program rules and guidelines for BIL's State Digital Equity Planning and Capacity Grant Programs that **require** State Library Agencies to be included as a partners in the planning and implementation of each state's Digital Equity plan.

"State library agencies are uniquely positioned within each state's education and knowledge infrastructure to build upon their experience in supporting community broadband access and digital literacy to ensure that the Digital Equity Grant funding brings the greatest benefit to the largest number of Americans" stated COSLA Board President, and Montana State Librarian Jennie Stapp.

The State Library Agencies collective experience with grants administration and federal funding, ensures that Digital Equity Grant programs will be effectively and efficiently developed and implemented. Drawing on the experience of the nation's 16,000+ public libraries, the Digital Equity Grant programs will further enhance the capacity of libraries to serve their communities as digital equity hubs that provide access to devices, the internet, robust digital content, digital literacy services and broadband adoption programs.

"We are optimistic that the NTIA will recognize the critical role that our nation's libraries can play in furthering the goals of this funding and the Digital Equity Act" offered COSLA Executive Director Jeremy Johannesen.

COSLA's submitted comments to NTIA are available [HERE](#).

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About COSLA

The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), an independent organization of the principal library officials in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories, responsible for statewide library development. Its purpose is to provide leadership on issues of common concern and national interest; to further state library agency relationships with federal government and national organizations; and to initiate cooperative action for the improvement of library services to the people of the United States. cosla.org