



EXECUTIVE ORDER #80

**Relating to the Creation of the Governor's Task Force on
Broadband Access**

WHEREAS, broadband access is an essential catalyst for economic development, rural prosperity, and community health across the state of Wisconsin;

WHEREAS, broadband access provides a gateway to education, employment opportunity, workforce readiness, essential services, telehealth, and civic participation;

WHEREAS, broadband access affects healthcare, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, public safety, energy, and commerce;

WHEREAS, according to the Federal Communications Commission's 2020 Broadband Deployment Report, approximately 410,000 Wisconsin residents, including 398,000 Wisconsin residents living in rural areas, lack any access to a fixed, terrestrial broadband service with a speed of at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated that, without broadband, many of Wisconsin's workers are unable to do their jobs or seek employment, our children cannot access virtual learning, and healthcare through telemedicine is inaccessible;

WHEREAS, expanding access to broadband internet is challenging in Wisconsin where many areas of our state do not have the population density to support a return on investment for internet service providers;

WHEREAS, access alone will not meet our goals—internet adoption and digital literacy are key components of equitable access;

WHEREAS, even in areas where broadband service is available, it may still be inadequate due to affordability, speed, or reliability concerns;

WHEREAS, all Wisconsinites should have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy, and economy; and

WHEREAS, solving Wisconsin's broadband challenges calls for a multifaceted strategic approach, with input from a variety of stakeholders.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TONY EVERS, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State, including Section 14.019 of the Wisconsin Statutes, do create the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access, and hereby order the following:

1. The Governor shall appoint an individual to chair the Task Force, and additional members who have experience or interest in broadband or digital inclusion.

2. The Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access shall be staffed by the State Broadband Office, housed at the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin.
3. The Task Force shall do the following:
 - a. Research and recommend forward-looking broadband policies and initiatives that address state broadband goals and needs;
 - b. Promote the efficient, strategic expansion of the broadband facilities and adoption across the state;
 - c. Explore and develop solutions, in collaboration with key broadband stakeholders and experts;
 - d. Report to the Governor and Legislature, annually by June 30, on:
 - i. Recommendations for facilitating the deployment and adoption of broadband in Wisconsin;
 - ii. Appropriate measures of digital inclusion and strategies for addressing identified gaps and inequities;
 - iii. Opportunities for coordination among state, local, and federal agencies;
 - iv. Current and future needs, barriers, and goals regarding broadband access, affordability, and adoption;
 - v. Opportunities for innovative approaches and partnerships to expand broadband adoption;
 - vi. The role of broadband in Wisconsin's key economic, public, and social sectors, including in education, healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing, industry, Tribal Nations, energy, libraries, public safety, and tourism;
 - vii. The extent to which consumers, health care providers, educational institutions, libraries, and service providers have accessed federal Universal Service Funds;
 - viii. Advances in broadband technology; and
 - ix. The adequacy and appropriateness of existing statutory broadband goals.
 - e. Identify and prepare technical or white papers on top priority issues concerning broadband in Wisconsin, as necessary.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this fourteenth day of July in the year of two thousand twenty.

TONY EVERS
Governor

By the Governor:

DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE
Secretary of State