



## NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

### NCAI TELECOMMUNICATIONS LIST SERVE UPDATE

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#### Comments Needed: Establishing a Tribal Broadband Factor to Support and Maintain Telecommunications Infrastructure Build-Out on Tribal Lands

Reply Comments are due to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on **June 13, 2016** regarding a proposal to develop a Tribal Broadband Factor in the universal service High Cost Fund. Tribal input is vital to this proceeding to ensure that funds are preserved and increased to support the deployment and maintenance of broadband infrastructure on tribal lands. NCAI and a number of other tribal and non-tribal entities have already submitted comments in the proceeding and we are requesting other tribal governments to file reply comments in support.

[Click Here to Download a Comment Template to File with the FCC](#)  
[Click Here for Instructions on How to File Comments to the FCC Docket](#)

Specifically, NCAI and our partners are requesting that the FCC move forward with creating a Tribal Broadband Factor with tribal and non-tribal carriers having the option to voluntarily receive the increased funding if they meet certain build-out and certification requirements. This would ensure that Rate-of-Return telecommunications companies receiving High Cost funds through the Tribal Broadband Factor are held accountable for broadband Internet deployment and maintenance on tribal lands.

NCAI also requested that the FCC waive or adjust limits on permitted operating expenses (opex) recoverable under the Tribal Broadband Factor—this would ensure that carriers have adequate opex funds to meaningfully engage with tribal governments to deploy services on tribal lands as well as working through multiple tribal and federal regulatory structures.

#### Additional Background

The Tribal Broadband Factor was first proposed by the National Tribal Telecommunications Association to provide reliable and ongoing funds for the purchase and maintenance of new equipment needed to build phone and Internet services on tribal lands. After nearly two years of consideration the FCC is now seeking comments on the establishment of a “Tribal Broadband Factor” to provide increased funding for tribal and non-tribal carriers serving tribal lands. This proposal has the potential of incentivizing new telecommunications service deployment on tribal lands or to provide improvements to existing phone and Internet services.

#### **Tribal Comments Filed:**

- [Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians](#)
- [Gila River Telecommunications, Inc.](#)
- [National Congress of American Indians](#) (reply comments)
- [National Tribal Telecommunications Association](#)

#### **Other Comments Filed in Support**

- [Alexicon Consulting](#)
- [NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association](#) (agrees generally with initial NTTA proposal but withholding further comments until review of further comments)
- [TCA](#)
- [Sacred Wind Communications, Inc.](#)