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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov) | | March 8, 2017 | 202-224-6244 |   **ICYMI: Heller Discusses Ways to Expand Nevada’s Rural Broadband with FCC Commissioners**  **(Washington, DC)** – Today, U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) spoke with commissioners from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) during a Senate Commerce Committee hearing. Senator Heller asked about a critical issue for rural Nevada: expanding access to broadband. He went on to discuss the possibility of including rural broadband funding in a potential infrastructure bill and how those funds could be efficiently utilized to expand broadband access in rural states like Nevada. Click [HERE](https://youtu.be/GAfp8Z7qlOk) or below to watch.     |  | | --- | | **Background:**   * [Building on his efforts from last Congress](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2016/3/icymi-heller-s-fight-to-improve-broadband-access-in-nevada-continues), Senator Heller remains committed to bringing broadband access to rural Nevadans and was pleased his amendments from last Congress were included in this year’s MOBILE Now Act (S.19):   + **Heller Amendment to Impose a 270-day Shot Clock on Application Decisions:** One of the greatest inhibitors to broadband infrastructure expansion is the time it takes for federal agencies, particularly those that manage federal lands, to act on applications for easements or rights-of-way for constructing or modifying broadband infrastructure on federal property. This amendment implements a 270-day shot clock for agencies to respond to applications for these specific easements or rights-of-way.   + **Heller Amendment to Streamline Broadband Facility Location Applications on Federal Lands**: This amendment requires the National Telecommunications & Information Administration (NTIA) to develop recommendations, in coordination with federal agencies that manage federal lands, to streamline the broadband facility location application process. NTIA must also follow up with these agencies regarding what actions have been taken in relation to these recommendations. * On February 2, 2017, [Senator Heller joined his colleagues in calling on the FCC](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/d2236120-4abf-4a77-87bf-599acaf9b9ca/02022017%20Cosign%20Letter%20to%20FCC%20Chairman%20Pai%20on%20Mobility%20Fund%20Phase%20II.pdf) to expand access to mobile broadband services in rural America and to make closing the digital divide a top priority for the Commission. * On January 31, 2017, [Senator Heller joined his colleagues in asking President Trump](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/3e6b13fe-e014-46d6-9c5c-15c3fe34cae0/01312017%20Cosign%20Letter%20to%20President%20Trump%20re%20Broadband%20in%20Infrastructure%20Package.pdf) to include investment in deploying high-speed broadband to all Americans as a part of any infrastructure package that could be considered by Congress. * On May 24, 2016, [Senator Heller wrote to the FCC](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/40329a18-44a1-414f-9059-c44d0e0d2531/05242016%20Heller%20Letter%20to%20FCC%20re%20Connect%20America%20Fund%20II.pdf), requesting that any funds directed toward broadband deployment in rural and high-cost areas are technology neutral to ensure that parts of the country with challenging terrain like Nevada can use technology that is cost-effective and feasible for delivering broadband to that area. * In February of 2016, Senator Heller [questioned panelists](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=29B14E4A-0E8D-423B-B89F-7C227577274D) at a Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee hearing regarding current FCC programs, such as the Connect America Fund and the Mobility Fund, and how these programs are being used by the Federal Communications Commission to bring rural communities greater Internet access. * In July of 2015, Senator Heller [spoke](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2015/7/heller-highlights-importance-of-expanding-internet-in-rural-nevada) at a Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee hearing addressing the future of wireless broadband and spectrum policy in rural towns. During the hearing, he spoke about the importance of bringing more spectrum to the market and highlighted how to deploy faster Internet service to rural areas across Nevada.   **###** |   [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |