

# ***The Broadband Reform and Investment to Drive Growth in the Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2020***

**Senator Michael Bennet**

High-speed broadband is essential to full participation in modern American life, allowing people to telework, learn remotely, and access telemedicine. However, millions of Americans still lack access – disproportionately from our rural areas, low-income neighborhoods, and communities of color. Even when communities have access, many are stuck with slow speeds, high costs, and few choices.

Over the past several decades, Washington has spent tens of billions of taxpayer dollars to deploy slow, outdated networks that fail to meet the needs of most communities. Meanwhile, since 2013, China's fiber infrastructure has grown nine times faster than ours. It is well past time America invested in a 21<sup>st</sup> century broadband infrastructure that will meet our needs not only today, but for years to come. The time has come to bridge the digital divide.

Senator Bennet's BRIDGE Act would:

- **Provide \$30 billion to States and \$1 billion to Tribal Governments** to connect unserved communities, hospitals, schools, and libraries to affordable, high-speed broadband that will meet their long-term needs.
- **Encourage gigabit-level internet** wherever possible while raising the minimum speeds for new broadband networks to at least 100/100 Mbps.
- **Emphasize affordability** by requiring new broadband networks to provide at least one low-cost option for low-income families.
- **Increase choice and competition** by lifting bans against municipal broadband networks and allowing more entities to compete for funding.
- **Overhaul broadband data** by funding for the Federal Communications Commission to reform its data collection while setting a one-year deadline.