

Satellite Is Not Broadband

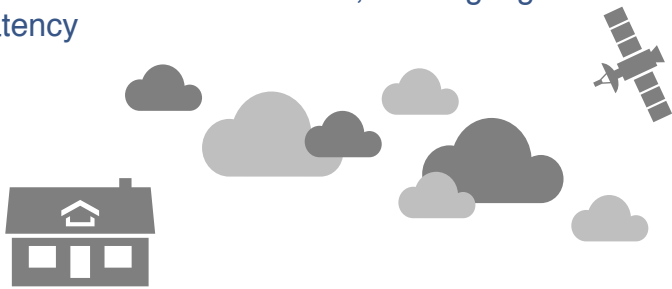
In 1996, Congress recognized the need for both urban and rural communities to have high-speed Internet service and passed the Telecommunications Act to encourage deployment across the entire U.S. New technologies have helped bring high-quality connectivity to more people than ever before, but many rural Americans still don't have access to broadband.



High-quality connectivity needs to be fast, affordable, and reliable. Satellite is none of the three.

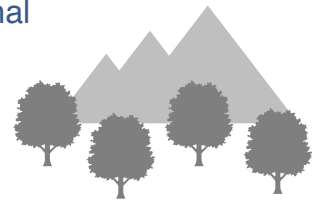
High Latency

- Signal travels long distance from home to satellite to ISP and back, causing lag or latency



Unreliable Connections

- Natural phenomenon, such as trees, hills, and clouds can interfere with signal
- Erratic performance and dropped connections are common



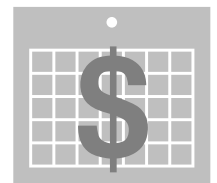
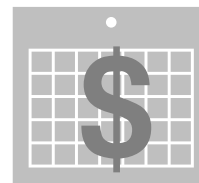
Slow Speeds

- Subscribers rarely reach minimum federal standards for broadband, regardless of advertising claims
- Maximum speeds require optimal conditions



Bad Service Plans

- Often require long-term commitments
- Service costs may increase after subscribers sign a contract
- Data Caps drive up the cost and interfere with subscribers' service until next billing cycle



“If it rains, or if it snows, or if they need to [listen to] a podcast or they want to watch anything educational, do research, listen to teachers online, they cannot do so because the connection ping time is so bad and on top of that, it uses too much of our plan.... Our kids can't do their homework at home.”

— Gerald Pine, Retired USAF; Eureka Springs, AR
Comment to the FCC



Banner County, Nebraska.
Public Domain Image from Wikimedia Commons

Rural areas need Internet access on par with urban areas.

Education

K-12 education in both rural and urban areas relies heavily on online resources. If satellite Internet service can handle the required upload capacity, uploading homework often uses up allocated data, driving up the cost of a family's plan. Rural kids who must rely on satellite Internet service are steps behind their urban peers.

Distance learning is a necessity when colleges and technical training programs are too far away from home. Satellite Internet access prevents rural residents from improving their economic opportunities through education.



Healthcare for Seniors and Veterans

Slow upload speeds prevent rural Americans from using telehealth applications if they depend on satellite Internet access.



Economic Development

Rural industries such as agriculture and food processing increasingly rely on high-speed Internet access for daily operations, including real-time commodity price reporting and Just-in-Time inventory management. Other companies seek out rural and exurban areas with fiber connectivity for large data centers and distribution centers. Satellite Internet does not have the capacity to meet the needs of these businesses.

Peaceful rural areas can also attract families, enhancing the tax base and strengthening the community. People can establish home-based businesses or work remotely, but satellite Internet access limits the ability to do so.



Calling Satellite Internet “Broadband” Means Leaving Rural Communities Behind

The fact that we can access the Internet using satellites is a triumph of technology. But it is better suited to truly remote locations, like in largely unsettled areas of Alaska and northern Canada. Satellite is not a long term solution for the vast majority of rural America that already has a wire running to the home for electricity. It may be useful while rural communities are waiting to be connected with better options, but embracing satellite as a long term solution condemns those regions to rapidly declining property values and few opportunities for economic development.



Franklin, Nebraska.

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