



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Heartland Forward Applauds Milestone on Affordable Connectivity Program**

*Since May, one million new households have enrolled in affordable internet program*

**Bentonville, Ark.** - Today, the Biden administration [announced](#) that since the May launch of their comprehensive, “all of government” effort to enroll Americans in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), one million new households have signed up to access affordable home internet. The ACP provides eligible households up to \$30 a month off their internet bills, and a one-time \$100 discount for a connected device.

**In response, Angie Cooper, chief program officer for Heartland Forward, a think-and-do tank that advocates on behalf of high-speed internet access in the heartland, released the following statement:**

“The Affordable Connectivity Program is a crucial part of Heartland Forward’s efforts to close the digital divide in the heartland and across the nation, and we are thrilled that one million new households have now enrolled. Much work still needs to be done to ensure all families, students and heartland residents have access to affordable, high-speed internet. Heartland Forward looks forward to continuing our work with local communities and policymakers across the heartland to bring collective resources to support efforts to bridge gaps that prevent states and municipalities from realizing their goals of universal connectivity. This isn’t a one-size fits all approach - it requires thinking outside of the box, building strategic partnerships and taking meaningful action.”

### **About Connecting the Heartland:**

Heartland Forward’s [Connecting the Heartland](#) initiative works to ensure heartland communities have the high-speed, affordable internet service necessary for full participation in life in the digital age. This robust, multipronged initiative aims to bridge the digital divide through a number of different programs, on the state and local level, engaging policymakers, community leaders and digital equity advocates along the way. In June 2021 Heartland Forward launched a paid and earned media campaign to raise awareness around the Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) that reached millions of heartland families who qualified for discounted internet service. As part of this campaign, we coordinated outreach efforts with over 40 partner organizations, including most recently with the [League of United Latin American Citizens \(LULAC\)](#) on an Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Awareness campaign in the Latinx community.

We have put boots-on-the-ground by working with Lead for America and Land O’Lakes to support the American Connection Corps Fellowship, the nation’s largest fellowship program focused on bridging the digital divide. Heartland Forward directly supports the young leaders working in Arkansas, Illinois, Ohio and Tennessee to help bring connectivity to their local communities. We are also funding a planning and capacity building program in Arkansas, Illinois, and Ohio through a partnership with the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society to help local communities learn how to plan and use the historic broadband infrastructure funding for community-driven broadband expansion.

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**About Heartland Forward:**

*Heartland Forward is a nonpartisan, 501c3 organization whose mission is to improve economic performance in the center of the United States by advocating for fact-based solutions to foster job creation, knowledge-based and inclusive growth and improved health outcomes. Heartland Forward conducts independent, data-driven research and programs to facilitate action-oriented discussion and impactful policy recommendations. To learn more, visit <https://heartlandforward.org/>.*