

# Talking Points

April 27, 2023



## NRECA Broadband – Why Participate?

### What is NRECA Broadband?

- NRECA Broadband supports America's electric cooperatives that are committed to bringing reliable, high-speed internet to our communities.
- Participation in this fee-for-service organization provides exclusive access to broadband-specific advocacy support, education, resources and guidance.

### Co-ops entering broadband need help navigating new business issues, risks and competition.

- By 2024, there will be an estimated 350 co-ops in the broadband business, so our network has reached a critical mass.
- Co-ops face a unique set of political risks and business issues distinct from the electric business.
- Additionally, we are competing with entrenched broadband providers like Charter and AT&T that spend as much as \$40 million a year on broadband-related advocacy efforts.
- Collectively, we need to collaborate and invest more to compete as a group with these organizations.

### The time is now.

- My co-op signed up for NRECA Broadband because the stakes are high, and we'll never have another chance like this to close the digital divide.
- We need a powerful, unified voice to represent our telecommunications interests in Washington. NRECA is best positioned and resourced to make an impact for us.

### We need NRECA to be our voice in Washington.

- For more than 80 years, NRECA has delivered results in Washington as the respected voice of America's electric cooperatives. Its bipartisan reputation is impeccable.
- NRECA is uniquely positioned to represent us and offers specialized staff providing direct input and feedback to the federal policymakers and agencies we need to engage with in this space.
- This is a competitive industry, and we can't go it alone. NRECA is the only organization that can bring us together, amplify our message and help us speak with one voice in the common best interest of electric co-ops.

### This is a worthy investment.

- [Include comments on the value you've experienced thus far from NRECA Broadband, whether from the Summit in November, resources you've received or other benefits. Current NRECA Broadband benefits are included on the next page for reference].
- Participation in NRECA Broadband is an investment, but it's a smart one. It's an investment to secure our future success as broadband providers, to strengthen our position in Washington, and to make our voice heard in ways it hasn't before.
- Now is the right time to do this. If we don't, we're going to be left behind.
- The more participants we have, the stronger our voice. We need all of us to come together to make a meaningful impact. I hope you'll join us.

## NRECA Broadband – Key Benefits

### Advocacy – examples of what NRECA Broadband has been doing.

- NRECA, in partnership with NRTC, submitted a bulk challenge to the FCC’s national broadband map. NRECA challenged 266,479 locations in six states on behalf of our members.
- NRECA is communicating our needs to Congress, including:
  - the need for Congress to prioritize networks and technologies that can deliver speeds at or above 100/100 Mbps.
  - the need for accurate national broadband maps.
  - the importance of flexibility in federal programs, especially for small providers such as cooperatives.
  - the importance of maintaining the co-op pole attachment exemption.
  - the need for additional middle mile network funding.
- NRECA has communicated and advocated for NTIA to implement policies that would benefit cooperatives, including:
  - The need to provide states flexibility on what data can determine unserved and underserved areas and to not water down definitions of those areas.
  - The need for flexibility to allow co-ops to address ongoing workforce challenges and shortages of domestically produced equipment and materials.

### Networking and education at NRECA events and complimentary director training.

- The exclusive NRECA Broadband Leadership Summit provides unique access to high-level representatives from all federal agencies (FCC, Treasury, USDA, NTIA) that are determining the future of broadband. It also provides opportunities for personal conversations, idea sharing and relationship building.
- In addition to the summit, NRECA Broadband offers exclusive access, education and activities for participants in conjunction with many of its popular events such as Legislative Conference, PowerXchange and regional meetings
- Directors from participating co-ops get free access to broadband due diligence training.

### Other exclusive benefits for NRECA Broadband participants.

- Discussion: monthly regulatory roundtables led by regulatory attorneys
- Resources: Expert guidance on key topics, including tax considerations, compliance issues, legislative updates and more
- Insights and engagement: weekly newsletter, web-based professional community
- Consultation: complimentary sessions with regulatory attorneys
- Dedicated learning: In addition to the summit, NRECA Broadband offers exclusive education and activities for participants in conjunction with many of its popular events such as PowerXchange, Legislative Conference, and more.