Washington's Internet for All

Washington State Broadband Office (WSBO)

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Washington State Department of Commerce

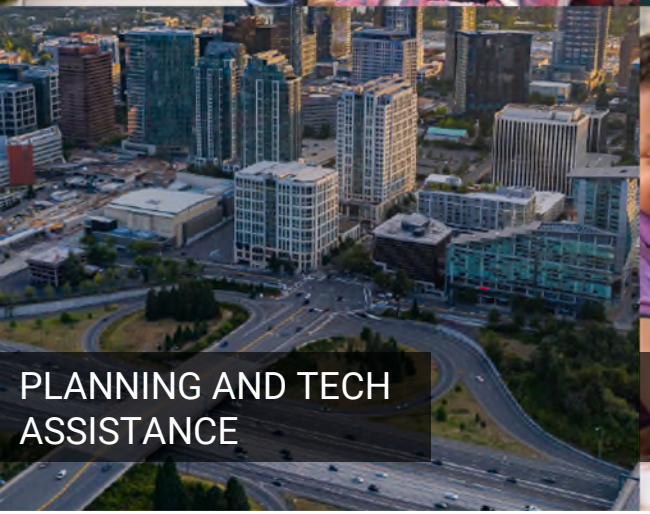
We strengthen communities

















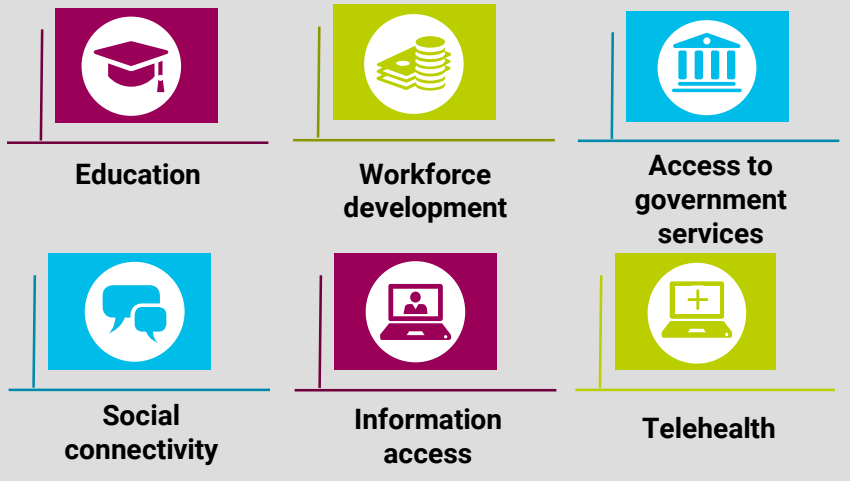
Internet for All Goals

The ***"digital divide"*** refers to the gap between those who have access to high-speed Internet and its benefits, and those who have limited or no access, driven by three key barriers.

- Access
- Affordability
- Adoption and Digital Literacy

Federal funding that states have received will help close the digital divide focusing on "unserved" (<25/3 Mbps) and "underserved" (<100/20 Mbps)* locations.

Benefits of high-speed Internet can include:



Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Overview

- **$1.23 Billion Funding Allocation from NTIA**
  - WA stepped up to the plate! State Broadband Office and other efforts (QR code, social media, press releases, crowdsourcing) added 71,000 unserved locations to FCC map through on a base of 167,000; 42% increase is top 10 in the nation
  - Fabric location challenges added 20,000 locations

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- **Initial Proposal Volume 1 – State Challenge Process**
  - NTIA-required State Challenge process
  - State challenge process is required to enhance the accuracy of served and unserved locations to improve map
  - State modifications to NTIA model process
  - Speed tests
  - Tribal consent
  - Expansion of Community Anchor Institutions (CAI): to include Youth Centers, Job Training Centers, and Senior Centers. Complete list is available in Draft Volume I.
  - Draft Volume 1 was submitted to NTIA at the end of December 2023 with final approval received in February of 2024.

Washington's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD) Activities

- **Initial Proposal Volume 2**
  - Project area definition
  - Affordability (beyond ACP)
  - Application scoring criteria
  - Fair labor practices
  - Workforce development
  - Cyber security
  - Draft Volume 2 published Nov. 1 with a 30-day comment period, ended Nov 30.
  - Draft Volume 1 and Volume 2 are now both approved by NTIA
  - Volume 2 received NTIA approval in May 2024.

State Challenge Process Overview

- **Challenge portal opened in April**
- Challenge Process Timeline
- Step 1: Challenge process – April 15 to May 14, 2024
  Step 2: Rebuttal phase – April 15 to June 23, 2024
  Step 3: Final determination – September 2024
- **Who was eligible to challenge?**
  - Local governments
  - Non-profit organizations
  - Tribal governments
  - Internet service providers

*dates subject to change

State Challenge Process Overview

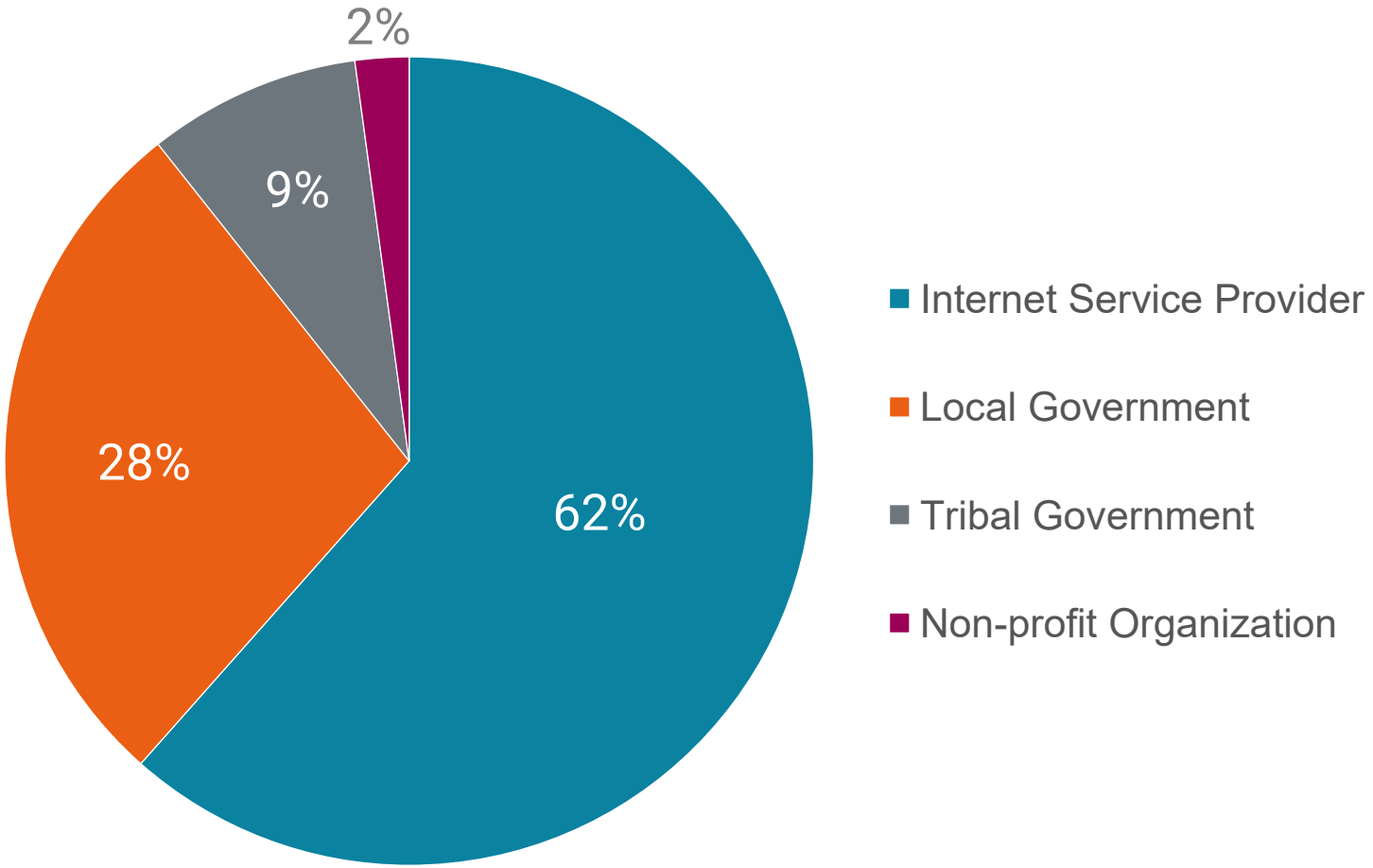
- **How many participated in the Challenge Process?**

Challenges Submitted by Non-WSBO Organizations – 20,861

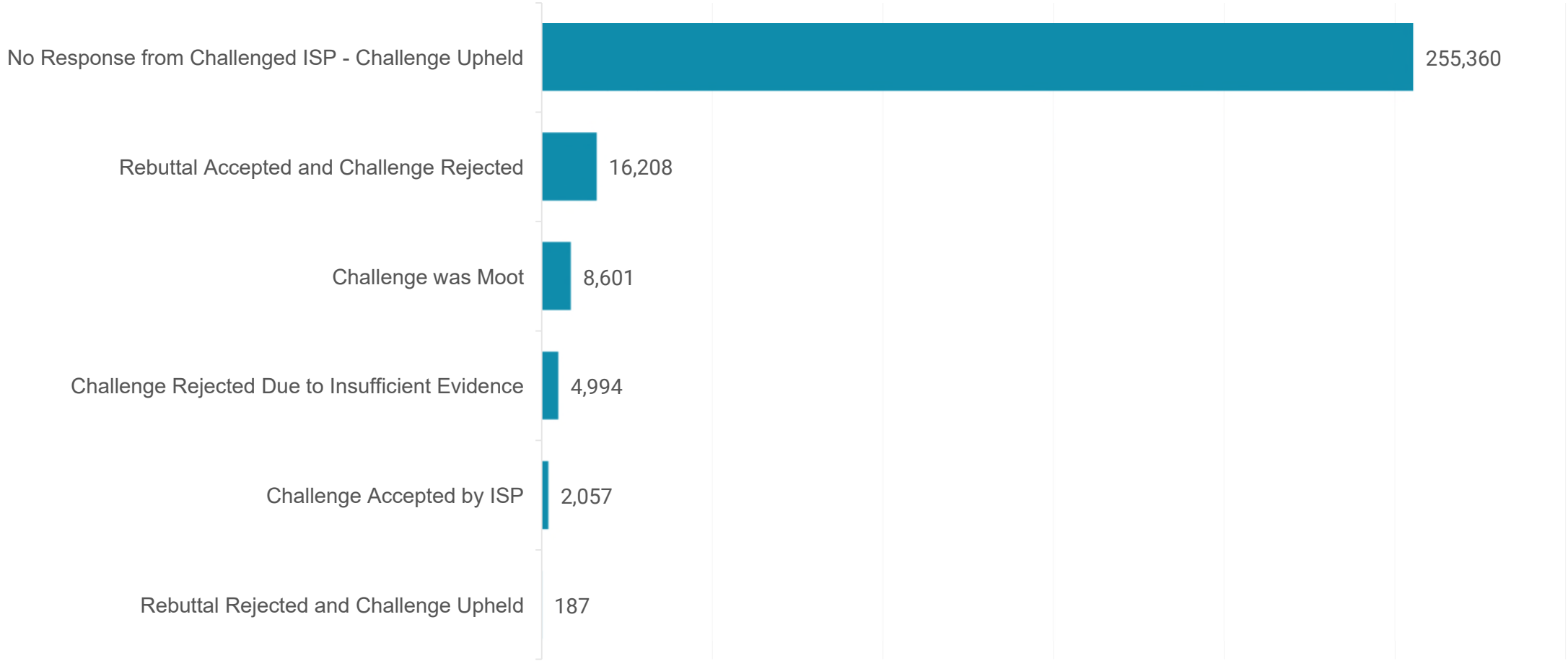
Locations Challenged by Area Challenge – 50,237

Rebuttals Received – 16,395

Challenge Period Results



Challenge Period Results



Subgrantee Selection Process Preview

- **Looking ahead - How can communities prepare to apply for BEAD funding?**

  - Engineer certified design to be submitted with application
  - Create a Pro forma
  - Obtain a Letter of Credit or Performance Bond
  - Obtain project Certifications
  - Disclose other public finding for self and affiliates
  - Prepare for audits of financial statements, along with providing proof of managerial, technical, and operational capability

Subgrantee Selection Process - Do not wait!!!

- **We expect application period to begin in fourth quarter 2024.**
- **Being prepared to apply for funds takes time and a great deal of effort**
- **Consider establishing partnerships today: tribes, associations, ISPs, PUDs, ports, schools, economic development staff, healthcare, etc**
- **Understand relationships with pole owners – early and frequent communication helps**
- **Start talks with permitting organizations to discuss timelines, costs and potential areas of concern**

Upcoming Legislative Priorities

- **Securing state match funds for public entities and tribes**
- **Spending authority for full BEAD funding to enable us to fund broadband projects statewide**
- **Spending authority releasing the federal funding for the full $15.9 million in Digital Equity Capacity Grants**
- **Digital Navigation funding**
- **Continuing our work on the Digital Equity Dashboard in partnership with the Office of Equity**

Upcoming Legislative Priorities

- **SBO program update including moving the Digital Equity Forum to the Office of Equity and SBO goals update (ARL) -** This ARL will formalize the movement of the Digital Equity Forum to the Office of Equity. The ARL will also update the SBO goals to align with the current work in PWB, CERB and the WSBO.

Thank you!

Questions?

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Washington State Department of Commerce

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Learn more about broadband funding in Washington state:
Broadband Funding - Washington State Department of Commerce