

April 1, 2025

Dear Fiber Broadband Association Members,

The first quarter of 2025 has been quite a rollercoaster ride for our industry. We started the year expecting to see shovels in the ground, with three states ready to deploy fiber to unserved and underserved communities with their NTIA BEAD final proposal approved. As with many federal government programs, the change in administration has resulted in a “pause” as we wait for new NTIA leadership to be confirmed by the Senate. The good news is that Ms. Arielle Roth’s Senate confirmation hearing to lead NTIA was held last week, and we expect her to hit the ground running once she is confirmed. Adam Cassidy, most recently the Chief of Staff to FCC Commissioner Nathan Simington, is currently serving as the Acting Assistant Secretary of NTIA. In addition to Louisiana (\$1.355B), Delaware (\$107M), and Nevada (\$416M), West Virginia (\$1.2B) has completed its service provider selection. That said, West Virginia announced on March 28 that it has requested a 90 day extension to submit its final proposal to NTIA. In total, 33 states and territories have begun selecting service providers and 47 states have concluded their state challenge process. In short, the states have continued to move forward, and we look forward to fiber deployment for the NTIA BEAD broadband infrastructure program as soon as the NTIA program revisions are implemented.

While these government broadband subsidies are important, our industry is investing 10X more in private capital for fiber broadband deployment. Last fall we were excited to see AT&T’s commitment to pass 50M homes with fiber by the end of the decade. Verizon and Frontier are expected to pass 35-40M homes with fiber during the same period, and many of our service provider members are investing significantly in fiber to ensure all Americans are connected. I was excited to have Su Shin, president of Hawaiian Telcom as my guest on [Fiber for Breakfast](#) earlier this year where she discussed how they were investing \$1.7B, with over \$1B in private capital to make Hawaii the first “all fiber” state by the end of 2026.

The Fiber Broadband Association has been laser focused on public policy this year, given the new leadership and policy direction in Washington. While we fully support the administration’s direction to streamline and accelerate the NTIA BEAD program, we needed to stay vigilant to ensure the new Members of Congress and officials within the Trump Administration fully appreciate the need for our nation’s critical broadband infrastructure to be built with fiber broadband. We are also meeting with state legislatures and with every state broadband office to ensure they are in possession of the facts and fully understand the limitations of alternative

technologies. Every state broadband office FBA has met with plans to deploy as much fiber as possible, they understand the significant role it plays in their economic development.

FBA's Public Policy Team, led by Marissa Mitrovich (FBA), FBA 2025 Board Chair Ariane Schaffer (GFiber), and the FBA Public Policy Committee leadership—Jordan Gross (Lumen), Chris Champion (C Spire), Glenn Reynolds (Nokia), and Carsi Mitzner (Brightspeed)—successfully hosted FBA's inaugural Public Policy Summit and DC Fly-In on Capitol Hill on February 26th and 27th. This landmark event underscored FBA's growing influence in shaping telecommunications policy. Attendees gained invaluable insights from members of Congress, FCC officials, and top Washington policy experts on critical industry priorities, key challenges, and strategies to streamline and accelerate broadband deployment. Following the summit, our members took action—splitting into four teams to engage directly with 30 congressional offices on The Hill. These high-impact discussions focused on fiber expansion, permitting reform, and other pressing industry issues. Additionally, Marissa Mitrovich and I reinforced our advocacy efforts with follow-up meetings at the FCC and within the Administration, ensuring that FBA's voice continues to drive meaningful policy advancements.

Shortly after FBA's Public Policy Summit, Congressman Richard Hudson (R-NC), who serves as the Chairman of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, led Republican members of the subcommittee in introducing the ***Streamlining Program Efficiency and Expanding Deployment (SPEED) for BEAD Act***. FBA was thankful that Representative Hudson requested and prioritized FBA's input before introduction. This bill would make critical improvements to the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program to ensure timely and accessible deployment.

Our Public Policy efforts will continue in 2Q with our 3rd annual Fiber Day on the Hill in the Rayburn building on Capitol Hill on April 9th. Last year we had over 350 members of Congress and their staff, the administration, the FCC and NTIA attend. We expect an even stronger turnout this year as we continue to remind our federal policymakers of the importance of fiber broadband for our nation's critical infrastructure.

FBA Performance

In the first quarter of 2025, the Fiber Broadband Association's growth continues to accelerate. The Association added 27 net new member companies since our Premier Members meeting in December. More impressive is that we now have over 1,100 employees from our member companies serving on one or more of our 21 committees and working groups.

On a financial basis, we ended February with strong revenue growth, outperforming our budget target by 35%. While the timing of our Fiber Connect 2025 annual conference prepaids were a significant contributor, FBA operations revenue also outperform the budget by 27% while tightly managing expenses to within 4% of budget. The key contributors to FBA's operations revenue growth were membership revenue, growing over 20% year-over-year, strong regional events, and we saw strong investment income over the first two months of the year. Our regional Fiber Connect Workshops in San Antonio in February set an attendance record and in Philadelphia in March was sold out.

Our committees and working groups are focused on developing and publishing studies and industry best practices. During the first quarter, FBA's committees, working groups, and research partners published the following studies and industry best practices:

- ["Accelerating AI with Fiber: Systems and Strategies"](#) (FBA/Entropy)
- ["Introduction to Passive Optical Network Splitter Architectures"](#) (FBA Technology Committee)
- ["The State of the North American Fiber Deployment"](#) (RVA January 2025)
- ["Fiber Anchors Sustained Economic Development"](#) – Charlottesville, VA (FBA/C2C, February 2025)

As we move into the second quarter of 2025, the following are our top-level goals:

1. Work closely with the new NTIA leadership to streamline and accelerate BEAD funding
2. Continue to educate policymakers with FBA's third annual Fiber Day on the Hill event on Capitol Hill on April 9
3. Propel Fiber Connect 2025 (June 1-4) to the top Fiber Broadband conference in the world
 - Take the attendee's experience to the next level
4. Execute FBA LATAM's Fiber Connect events in Mexico (April) and Brazil (May)

I look forward to seeing our entire industry at Fiber Connect 2025 in Nashville (June 1-4). While last year's record conference will be hard to beat, we will be taking the experience of this event to the next level. We have also created special experiences for our industry's C-Suite executives, the State Broadband Offices, and for our Tribal Broadband Leaders. The quality of our speakers for the main stage general sessions, the breakout sessions, and the C-Suite forum will make this a "can't miss" event. We have also taken our entertainment and experience to a new level. We will end Fiber Connect 2025 on Wednesday June 4th with the State Broadband Summit that will set the tone and answer outstanding questions on the rollout of fiber for the NTIA BEAD



From the Office of the President & CEO

program. The team has been working for the entire year to ensure that this will be best, most informative, and most productive broadband conference in the world.

As we predicted, 2025 will be the defining moment for our industry and I could not be more excited. As always, you can reach me 24/7 on my cell phone (listed below) or by email. If I or anyone on my staff can help you and your company accelerate the deployment of fiber, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Bolton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gary Bolton
President and CEO
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