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GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY

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Governor Kelly Announces Kansas Wins Nearly \$43M to Build Key Infrastructure for High-Speed Internet

TOPEKA – Governor Laura Kelly announced today that the National Telecommunications Information and Administration (NTIA) has awarded the Kansas Office of Broadband Development (KOBD) nearly \$43 million to develop infrastructure key to expanding affordable high-speed internet to remote and underserved communities. The open-access “middle mile” infrastructure will connect local Internet networks, primarily in rural areas, to major, high-capacity national and regional networks.

The grant application was submitted in collaboration with the Kansas Department of Commerce, Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas Research and Education Network (KanREN), and private providers. Governor Kelly sent a [letter](#) in support of the application.

"Every day, my administration works to deliver high-speed internet to more Kansas families and businesses," **Governor Laura Kelly said.** "That's why I supported our application for this grant that will set up the infrastructure needed to reach 27,000 more homes and provide opportunities for economic success across the state."

The NTIA's Middle Mile Program is funded by the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

"The internet is used to access crucial resources such as employment opportunities, business software capabilities, virtual learning, and health care," **Representative Sharice Davids (KS-03) said.** "This new federal investment will help close the digital gap and keep our communities connected – particularly those who have not had access to high-speed internet in the past. I am proud to have voted for the bipartisan infrastructure law that continues to make a positive impact on the lives of Kansas families."

The grant will fund a 682-mile fiber optic network to connect Liberal to Garden City, Pratt to Wichita, Kismet to Minneola, Wichita to Pittsburg, and Pittsburg to Overland Park.

“Broadband availability is key to supporting our current economic momentum and providing the best quality of life for every Kansan,” **Lieutenant Governor and Commerce Secretary David Toland said.** “This grant will accelerate our infrastructure development across the state, positioning us to achieve Governor Kelly’s goal of becoming a top 10 state for broadband access.”

This grant will bring numerous benefits, including:

- Next-generation communications for public safety and transportation
- Dedicated fiber network for higher education institutions, public safety organizations, hospitals, and more
- Enhanced connectivity for Veterans Affairs facilities
- Promotion of economic development
- Accelerated expansion to rural households and businesses
- Network security and resiliency

“This award highlights the power of public and private partnerships,” **said Calvin Reed, Acting Secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT).** “Leveraging state investment to bring federal grant dollars to address this critical infrastructure need is a win for all Kansans. KDOT is excited to be part of this opportunity to move Kansas forward.”

“Middle-mile infrastructure is crucial in bridging the connectivity gap,” **said Broadband Development Director Jade Piros de Carvalho.** “This award will open up opportunities for remote operations throughout Kansas and help drive commerce in previously underserved areas.”

More information about the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program is available at [Middle Mile \(kansascommerce.gov\)](https://middlemile.kansascommerce.gov). Additional details about federal broadband efforts are available at AffordableConnectivity.gov and InternetforAll.gov.

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