



ACCOMPLISHMENTS & GOALS

SEPTEMBER 2016

Formed in 2009 during the Great Recession, the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition was created to help connect schools, libraries, health clinics, and other **Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs)** to open, affordable, high-capacity broadband. Anchor institutions make Internet-based services available to the people most in need - students, elderly, homeless, low-income, rural, and unemployed populations. **The SHLB Coalition is the only organization that represents all anchor institutions.** By working closely with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the U.S. Department of Commerce, other Executive Branch agencies and Congress, SHLB recommends forward-looking policies that embrace technological change. Our work allows everyone to benefit from improved education, health care, and quality of life. SHLB's advocacy has already connected thousands of anchor institutions and, with additional funding, could connect thousands more.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



2009 - 2010

1. Prominent Recognition of Anchor Institutions in National Broadband Plan

The SHLB Coalition worked with Blair Levin and his team of FCC officials while they drafted the National Broadband Plan (NBP). Because of SHLB's advocacy, NBP Goal #4 specifically calls for anchor institutions in every community to have gigabit connectivity by the year 2020.

2009 - 2014

2. Community Anchor Institution BTOP Grants

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) received \$7.2 billion to deploy broadband infrastructure through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). Due to SHLB's advocacy, the second (and final) round of BTOP funding focused on Middle Mile broadband deployments to CAIs, which resulted in **broadband connections for over 25,000 anchor institutions from 123 BTOP grants.**

2010 - 2015

3. CAF Recipients Required to Serve Rural Anchor Institutions

The Connect America Fund (CAF) provides financial support to broadband companies that serve high-cost rural areas to ensure consumers receive prices comparable to urban consumers. Because of SHLB's efforts, the FCC required CAF recipients to address the broadband needs of CAIs in addition to residential consumers. The SHLB Coalition also convinced the FCC to require CAF recipients to respond to E-rate bids to promote competition.

2013 - 2016

4. E-rate Reform

E-rate helps schools and libraries acquire telecommunications and Internet access at affordable rates. SHLB played a crucial role in the 2014 E-rate reform and was cited over 30 times in the FCC's Order. SHLB:

- sponsored a cost study demonstrating the need for additional E-rate funding. **This study convinced the FCC to increase E-rate funding by \$1.5 billion per year.**
- overcame opposition from incumbent telephone companies to make dark fiber and managed wireless services eligible for E-rate support. The inclusion of dark fiber and managed wireless services increases technology options, lowers costs, and reduces the draw on the federal E-rate fund.

2015 - 2016

5. Lifeline Reform

The Lifeline Program began in 1985 to provide discounted phone service to low-income Americans. The SHLB Coalition supported the FCC's proposal to reform the Lifeline program to include broadband. SHLB also convinced the FCC to allow CAIs to serve as broadband aggregators and providers eligible for Lifeline subsidies.

2016

6. Connecting Anchor Institutions: A Broadband Action Plan

In July 2016, SHLB released "Connecting Anchor Institutions: A Broadband Action Plan." The Action Plan, published in partnership with the Benton Foundation, consists of a vision paper and ten policy papers that provide a roadmap for government leaders at federal, state, and local levels to address CAI broadband needs.

INFORMATION SERVICES



Conferences

Since 2010 SHLB has hosted a series of premier conferences on anchor institution broadband. Its Annual Conference and state conferences feature a variety of White House, FCC, NTIA and Congressional policy-makers. Attendees receive practical and policy information on issues such as E-rate, dark fiber, rural health, and other universal service programs.

Policy Calls

SHLB holds policy calls every two weeks with its members to give them an update on the most recent policy developments and craft policy recommendations.

Website and Social Media

SHLB's website and social media presence provides a wealth of information on policy issues, upcoming events, and research. The website also contains a portal associated with its Grow2Gig+ Campaign and recently released Broadband Action Plan that is updated with new information and case studies.



CURRENT POLICY INITIATIVES

SHLB continues to build on its successful policy advocacy. With additional funding, SHLB hopes to complete the following projects and initiatives:

1. Transition Document for the Next Administration

SHLB is leading an effort to craft a document with specific policy recommendations for the incoming Administration. Both major presidential candidates have released infrastructure proposals, and Secretary Clinton explicitly calls for the connection of CAIs. SHLB has positioned itself to work closely with the next Administration in achieving these policy goals moving forward.

2. Grow2Gig+ Campaign

The Action Plan jumpstarted SHLB's larger **Grow2Gig+ Campaign**, a year-long effort that consists of an interactive web portal, monthly webinars, and social media campaigns to make gigabit speeds for anchor institutions a national priority.

3. Special Access/Business Data Services Reform

Business Data Services (BDS), formerly known as Special Access, are the estimated \$25 billion a year market for high-capacity data connections. Schools, hospitals, universities, and other anchor institutions purchase these special access lines to transmit large amounts of data quickly. Yet 75% of consumers currently have at most one option for these broadband services. SHLB has filed comments with the FCC, held meetings with policy-makers at the FCC and on Capitol Hill, participated in public forums, and joined the Competify Coalition with the goals of lowering BDS rates and increasing competition.

4. Aggregate Lifeline Applications

Now that the FCC has reformed the Lifeline program, SHLB is exploring how CAIs can help connect more low-income people to broadband. In particular, SHLB is working with broadband companies, public interest organizations, and the FCC to facilitate aggregate Lifeline applications. This could allow schools, libraries, and other CAIs to apply for Lifeline subsidies in bulk, reducing administrative burdens on both consumers and broadband companies.

5. Telehealth Petition

SHLB spearheaded the launch of a Telehealth Petition with the FCC to improve the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) and drive greater broadband investment to rural health clinics. The Petition for Rulemaking was filed with the FCC in December 2015 with six Telehealth Networks (from New England, Montana, Colorado, California, New Mexico and Utah). The petition received significant support from health organizations, such as the American Hospital Association and HIMSS. SHLB is working to convince the FCC to take up this issue in early 2017.

6. Spectrum and WiFi Services

As a member of WifiForward, SHLB advocates for more spectrum for unlicensed services to address WiFi congestion. SHLB has sent letters to policy-makers, met with FCC officials, and spoken publicly about the need for greater spectrum for wireless broadband services. In addition, SHLB filed comments giving qualified support to Globalstar's effort to make a fourth wireless channel available to promote competition. Globalstar has offered to provide 20,000 free access points to schools, libraries and health providers if its application is approved.

7. E-rate Fiber and Wireless

SHLB is exploring how to build a community of schools and libraries that want to manage their own broadband networks to reduce costs and increase service to their communities. SHLB works closely with schools and libraries to make it easier for them to pursue new cost-saving options. SHLB is also supporting schools and libraries that wish to expand Internet services to residential consumers using fiber, white spaces, or other technologies.



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

NTIA's Community Connectivity Initiative

SHLB has closely collaborated with NTIA in developing its Community Connectivity Initiative, a framework to encourage communities to develop their own broadband plans. SHLB has promoted this with workshops and webinars and is listed as a supporter on the White House Fact Sheet.

ConnectED, ConnectHome, and ConnectALL

The Obama Administration launched the ConnectED (2013), ConnectHome (2015), and ConnectALL (2016) initiatives to connect students, residents of public housing, and Americans far and wide to affordable, high-capacity broadband. SHLB has publicly supported all three of these public-private partnership initiatives and recently participated in a roundtable workshop hosted by the White House.

Broadband Opportunities Council

In 2015, President Obama created the Broadband Opportunities Council (BOC) to engage with industry and other stakeholders and to assess how the Executive Branch can better support the broadband needs of communities. SHLB filed comments with the BOC and hosted a BOC Plenary Panel at its Annual Conference.

National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)

SHLB's Executive Director supported the founding of NDIA and currently serves on its Directing Council.

MiCTA

SHLB's Executive Director was recently elected to serve on the Board of MiCTA, a non-profit organization providing contractual services to schools, libraries and health providers.

WifiForward

See Current Policy Initiatives-6

Benton Foundation

See Accomplishments-6

Competify

See Current Policy Initiatives-3