

\$1B in grants to go for broadband on tribal lands

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The Biden administration is making available \$1 billion in federal grants to expand the availability of high-speed internet on tribal lands.

Vice President Kamala Harris, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and Interior Secretary Deb Haaland announced the funding Thursday. It comes from the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration, and was included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act.

The Federal Communications Commission has estimated that about one-third of people living on tribal lands don't have access to high-speed internet, but others say the figure is much higher.

"For generations, a lack of infrastructure investment in Indian Country has left tribes further behind in the digital divide than most areas of the country," Haaland said. "We have a responsibility as a country to build infrastructure that will fuel [economic development](#), keep communities safe and ensure everyone has opportunities to succeed."

The [program](#) will prioritize the deployment of broadband to underserved households on tribal lands, according to a release. It also invites proposals that address the [digital divide](#), including those related to telehealth, education and [workforce development](#).

The investments will help many Native American, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities gain access to life-saving technologies,

economic opportunities and remote learning, Raimondo said.

"This funding is an important step forward, but we cannot stop here," she said. "Access to broadband is as essential as electricity to our everyday life."

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