# S 3838

Health Care Broadband Expansion During COVID–19 Act

**Congress:** 116 (2019–2021, Ended)
**Chamber:** Senate
**Policy Area:** Science, Technology, Communications
**Introduced:** May 21, 2020
**Current Status:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.
**Latest Action:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (May 21, 2020)
**Official Text:** https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3838

## Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Schatz, Brian [D-HI]
**Party:** Democratic • **State:** HI • **Chamber:** Senate

## Cosponsors (7 total)

| Cosponsor | Party / State | Role | Date Joined |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sen. Boozman, John [R-AR] | R · AR | | May 21, 2020 |
| Sen. Cramer, Kevin [R-ND] | R · ND | | May 21, 2020 |
| Sen. King, Angus S., Jr. [I-ME] | I · ME | | May 21, 2020 |
| Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA] | D · MA | | May 21, 2020 |
| Sen. Murkowski, Lisa [R-AK] | R · AK | | May 21, 2020 |
| Sen. Peters, Gary C. [D-MI] | D · MI | | May 21, 2020 |
| Sen. Sullivan, Dan [R-AK] | R · AK | | May 21, 2020 |

## Committee Activity

| Committee | Chamber | Activity | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee | Senate | Referred To | May 21, 2020 |

## Subjects & Policy Tags

**Policy Area:**

Science, Technology, Communications

## Related Bills

| Bill | Relationship | Last Action |
|---|---|---|
| 116 HR 6800 | Related bill | **Jul 23, 2020:** Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 116-517. |
| 116 HR 6474 | Related bill | **Apr 10, 2020:** Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. |

## Summary (as of May 21, 2020)

### Health Care Broadband Expansion During COVID-19 Act

This bill temporarily expands the Rural Health Care Program of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in response to COVID-19 (i.e., coronavirus disease 2019). It also establishes and provides funding for the Emergency Rural Health Care Connectivity Fund through FY2022 to carry out the Rural Health Care Program.

Currently, the FCC subsidizes 65% of the cost of broadband for eligible public and nonprofit rural health care facilities through the Rural Health Care Program. This bill expands the program to encompass health care providers not located in rural areas, including mobile and temporary facilities, and it increases the subsidy rate to 85%.

The bill also requires the FCC to (1) promulgate regulations to expedite the receipt of funds under the program, and (2) release funding for all requests within a designated time frame.

## Actions Timeline

- **May 21, 2020:** Introduced in Senate
- **May 21, 2020:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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