

## HR 6881

### Emergency Broadband Connections Act of 2020

**Congress:** 116 (2019–2021, Ended)

**Chamber:** House

**Policy Area:** Science, Technology, Communications

**Introduced:** May 14, 2020

**Current Status:** Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

**Latest Action:** Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. (May 14, 2020)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/6881>

## Sponsor

**Name:** Rep. Veasey, Marc A. [D-TX-33]

**Party:** Democratic • **State:** TX • **Chamber:** House

## Cosponsors (1 total)

| Cosponsor                                  | Party / State | Role | Date Joined  |
|--|---------------|------|--------------|
| Rep. Blunt Rochester, Lisa [D-DE-At Large] | D · DE        |      | Jul 30, 2020 |

## Committee Activity

| Committee                     | Chamber | Activity    | Date         |
|-------------------------------|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Energy and Commerce Committee | House   | Referred To | May 14, 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 S 4095  | Related bill | Jun 29, 2020: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.                 |

## **Emergency Broadband Connections Act of 2020**

This bill establishes an emergency broadband benefit for certain households during the emergency period related to COVID-19, and it modifies the Lifeline program of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which reduces the cost of communications services for low-income consumers.

Specifically, the bill requires a broadband service provider to provide a low-income household, upon request, with broadband internet service at a price that is discounted in an amount equal to the emergency broadband benefit for such household. The emergency broadband benefit is a monthly discount that is applied to the normal rate for internet service. Further, the bill establishes the Emergency Broadband Connectivity Fund from which the FCC shall reimburse a provider in an amount equal to the emergency broadband benefit provided to a household. Providers that supply discounted connected devices (e.g., computers) to eligible households may also receive certain reimbursements from the fund.

The bill requires service providers participating in the FCC's Lifeline program to provide an unlimited number of minutes and data during the emergency period. The bill also requires the FCC to make a grant to each state for connecting the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the food stamp program) database to the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier, so that receipt of SNAP benefits is reflected in the Lifeline verifier. The verifier determines consumer eligibility for the Lifeline program, and receipt of SNAP benefits automatically qualifies a household for Lifeline service.

## **Actions Timeline**

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- **May 14, 2020:** Introduced in House
- **May 14, 2020:** Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.