

**ADAMS** BROADBAND

**ADAMS** DIGITAL CABLE

**ADAMS** DIGITAL PHONE

**ADAMS** HIGH DEFINITION

**ADAMS** Community Channel **107**

**ADAMS CABLE SERVICE**

19 North Main Street, Carbondale, PA 18407

1-888-222-0077 [www.adamscable.com](http://www.adamscable.com)



April 5, 2021

**Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

**State lawmakers tout PNC Park as ideal spot for relocated MLB All-Star Game**

**USA Today**  
**Americans will add even more streaming subscriptions in 2021**

**CNBC**  
**Republican Sen. Roy Blunt calls on Biden to slash massive infrastructure plan to \$615 billion**

**Reuters**  
**Biden will push through infrastructure plan if no Republican support - energy secretary says**

**Politico**  
**Biden struggling to fill DOJ job that could rein in Silicon Valley**

**New York Times**  
**Biden's Plan to Fix America's Internet**

**Wilkes-Barre Times Leader**

Fueled by a pandemic that forced millions to work and school from home, 2020 was one for the history books in upstream data consumption, when data flows from the user to the network. (BCAP Associate Member) OpenVault's latest Broadband Insights [study](#) put that trend under its microscope and found that total upstream consumption surged 63% in 2020, roughly 350% higher than historic growth rates. "Pandemic lockdowns changed the nature of upstream usage – in all likelihood, forever," OpenVault declared in the study.

While security cameras and video uploads are the kinds of services and activities that typically tax the upstream, the increased use of videoconferencing apps was among the primary upstream culprits in 2020. OpenVault notes that a [one-hour group call on Zoom can chew up between 360 megabytes to 1.2 gigabytes](#), depending on the quality. OpenVault, which bases its studies on anonymized data from US ISP partners, found that monthly upstream consumption in 2020 peaked at 31 GB by year's end to make up the aforementioned 63% surge over year-end 2019.

Amplifying the Zoom situation, the study also found that the biggest boost in consumption in 2020 occurred during business hours – with usage exploding 98.5%, from 5.25 GB to 10.42 GB between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. – rather than the historic upstream peak period between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. Additionally, average upstream usage was 0.96 GB on weekdays, 7% higher than it was on the weekends. Among other nuggets, upstream consumption was fairly concentrated, as the top 1% of subscribers accounted for 30% of upstream usage, and the top 5% of subs accounted for about 30%. "During peak hours, it is not uncommon for operators to have a single subscriber account for more than 80% of upstream usage on a given MAC domain," the company said.

US cable networks were able to hold up against the upstream strain in 2020, despite a thin slice of spectrum – usually between 5MHz and 42MHz – dedicated to the upstream. However, it's becoming clear that cable operators didn't stand still, as 2020 was marked by increased activity around network node splits, the [use of AI-assisted tools and techniques](#), and a push toward "mid-split" and "high-split" spectrum upgrades that expand the amount cable network capacity dedicated to the upstream. But there was also plenty of upstream channel purchases in traditional cable network gear, with Dell'Oro Group [reporting](#) that spending on upstream CMTS channel purchases jumped 43% in 2020. – *LightReading*

The problems with U.S. broadband networks have been obvious for years. Service costs more than in many other rich nations, it still doesn't reach tens of

[Wolf, Casey, Cartwright praise Biden's spending plan; Toomey, Meuser opposed](#)

[Washington Post How America's surveillance networks helped the FBI catch the Capitol mob](#)

millions of Americans and the companies that provide it don't face much competition.

Now the Biden administration is promising to do something about all of those issues as part of its [proposed \\$2.3 trillion infrastructure package](#). The plan, which would devote [\\$100 billion](#) to get all Americans connected, is more idea than policy and lacks a lot of important detail. But it sketches out a striking new vision of activist government measures intended to improve high-speed internet service, following decades in which the government has largely left the job to private companies.

What is Biden's proposal? It would spend \$100 billion to "future-proof" broadband as part of an eight-year infrastructure plan, calling high-speed connections "the new electricity" that's now a necessity for all Americans. (For history buffs, that's a reference to the Rural Electrification Act — Depression-era legislation that [sped the extension of power lines](#) to farms and rural communities.) It could signal a major policy shift toward lowering the high cost of internet service, rather than just handing money to broadband providers for building out networks. "Americans pay too much for internet," the plan bluntly states.

It pushes for greater competition that could lower prices, by encouraging and supporting networks owned or affiliated with local governments, cooperatives and nonprofit organizations. Currently, roughly 20 states restrict municipal broadband. Prioritizing such networks could give them a leg up when the government doles out money for extending service. "The most important thing about what President Biden has done in the proposal is that he's redefined the digital divide," said Larry Irving, a top telecom official in the Clinton administration. "The simple act of recognizing that poverty is a bigger indicator of lack of access than geography is a huge statement." It's not clear how the Biden administration plans to bring that about.

Why is this necessary? The pandemic has made clear that millions of Americans are not online, a problem that [isn't limited to rural](#) areas but includes [cities too](#). The White House says more than 30 million Americans don't have access to high-speed internet at all, and millions more can't afford it. The divide persists even after the government has spent billions encouraging broadband providers to connect far-flung and often isolated communities. From 2009 through 2017, federal spending on such programs totaled \$47.3 billion, according to a [government watchdog](#) report. An additional [\\$20 billion](#) is lined up over the next decade for rural broadband, and another \$9 billion for [high-speed wireless internet called 5G](#) in sparsely populated regions. Billions more flowed to broadband from the three huge relief packages enacted during the pandemic.

America's rural-internet policy has been an ongoing mistake, said Gigi Sohn, an official in the Obama-era FCC. "A lot of what we have is very slow," she said. The White House now says it wants "future-proof" networks "in unserved and underserved areas," so they don't have to be rebuilt again years later because they're out-of-date. Exactly what those terms means for what gets built and where isn't clear, either, and many Republicans oppose putting federal funds to work in areas that do have internet even if it's slow — what's called "overbuilding."

Will Congress support this plan? The \$2.3 trillion infrastructure plan [has its detractors](#). Some Democrats are disappointed because they wanted more. On the other hand, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky called it a "Trojan horse" for tax hikes. Internet access is a bipartisan issue, but Republican leaders of the House and Senate Commerce committees called Biden's approach on broadband wasteful.

Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers of Washington, the Republican ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said Biden's plan would "hurt private investment in our networks without actually closing the digital divide." She called for trimming regulations on building infrastructure to help prompt

investment. Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi, the Republican ranking member of Senate Commerce, said the proposal "opens the door for duplication and overbuilding." Congressional Democrats have recently introduced major broadband legislation of their own, including a [\\$94 billion bill](#) from Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Rep. James Clyburn of South Carolina, the House Majority Whip, who both said they approved of the White House's approach.

What does big broadband say? Republicans' concerns echo those from industry. The cable lobbying group NCTA said the White House "risks taking a serious wrong turn ... by suggesting that the government is better suited than private-sector technologists to build and operate the internet." The NCTA also said it was worried about price regulation. The Biden document does not mention price controls. Jonathan Spalter, CEO of the lobbying group USTelecom, said that prioritizing investments in government-owned broadband is "exactly the wrong approach" since taxpayers will get the bill if such networks fail. He also claimed that broadband prices are already falling.

The Labor Department says pricing for telephone services, which includes internet plans along with phone service, has dropped about 7% over the past decade. Internet service costs, which include things like web hosting, have risen 2%. A think tank with a lot of tech-industry funding, New America, [says prices are higher](#) in the U.S. compared with Asia and Europe. – **Associated Press**

---

Starting Saturday, callers in Pennsylvania's 814-area code needed to dial 10 digits, not just seven, as the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission gets ready to add a second area code to the region. Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission press secretary Nils Hagen-Frederiksen said 814 is one of the original Pennsylvania area codes established in 1947. It's the only region that hasn't already gotten another area code added to it, and it stretches from Johnstown to State College to Erie. "It's had a good run, but realistically we're getting down to the bottom of the barrel in terms of available phone numbers," Hagen-Frederiksen said.

Apparently, all those newfangled devices — cell phones, tablets, wifi hotspots — are eating up phone numbers. Rather than splitting the region into two separate areas, the PUC is adding an "overlay" area code. When all the 814 numbers are gone, new lines will get 582 as their area code. That could happen as early as May 1. Hagen-Frederiksen said they're urging residents and businesses to make sure devices — including security systems and medical alerts — are programmed to include area codes. The change will not affect 911 calls. **PUC, Associated Press**

