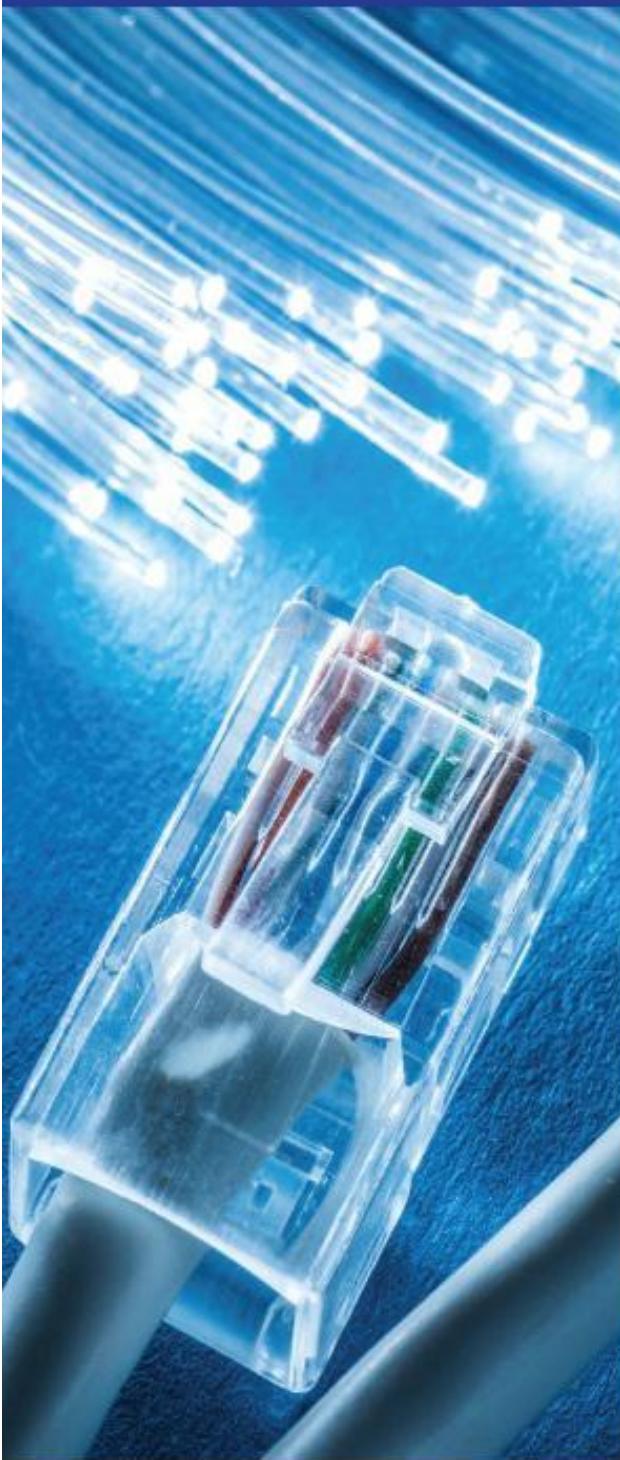


PA Townships Value Relationship with Cable Industry



The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors salutes a longstanding working relationship with BCAP that has benefited millions of our commonwealth's citizens.

PSATS members have had successful partnerships with the commonwealth's cable companies for decades. The result has been a Pennsylvania-born technology that continues to provide entertainment, education, and communications services for generations of our state's citizens and businesses.

If there was ever a template for blending technology providers with local government, our 70-year-old working relationship with BCAP members is it.

PSATS looks forward to continuing and growing its partnership with broadband cable companies in the years ahead to deliver services to ALL Pennsylvanians!



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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
Internet issues surface during Pittsburgh Public Schools' first day of online learning

TVNewsCheck
AT&T/DirecTV
Divorce Offers Important Lessons

Ars Technica
AT&T's current 5G is slower than 4G in nearly every city tested by PCMag

New York Times
Reed Hastings Had Us All Staying Home Before We Had To

Politico
Trump's lost summer: Focused on Fox News, not on battleground states

Philadelphia Inquirer
Biden outspent Trump \$10 million to zero on TV in Pennsylvania last month

Pennlive
Harrisburg-based polling organization finds Trump, Biden in statistical tie

The Hill
Biden up by 9 points in Pennsylvania: poll

"As the appointed representative of the Audet family, which owns controlling shares of Cogeco Inc. and, indirectly, Cogeco Communications Inc., I want to provide absolute clarity to stakeholders regarding our intentions in response to the recent unsolicited proposal to acquire Cogeco. Our stocks are not for sale. And let me be clear, our refusal is not a negotiating position, it is final.

Our father started this business 63 years ago in Trois-Rivières, Quebec, sowing the seeds of a business that today has a story of incredible growth. The company went public in 1985 and annual revenues by that time had increased to \$ 20 million. Today they are \$ 2.5 billion. The company is well managed, growing, strategically positioned for the evolving and dynamic future of the telecommunications and media industries.

My family, together with our boards of directors and our management team, are very proud and satisfied with our long term vision for the continued growth of Cogeco and the ownership structure that makes this long term vision possible." – **Statement from Louis Audet, President of Gestion Audem Inc. (holding 69 percent of voting rights at Cogeco)**

The State Senate approved a bill Tuesday that would establish a grant program to extend broadband services in under-served areas of the state. This bill was announced by Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman (R-34.) "The greater need for distance learning, telehealth and more during COVID-19 widened our digital divide," Senator Corman said. "Today, we are taking steps to narrow it again."

Senate Bill 835 would provide funding to improve access to high-speed broadband internet in rural areas of PA, which currently do not have access to reliable networks. It would limit funding to entities that have demonstrated the ability to construct and administer internet services and require that they provide 20 percent of the funding for the project.

Access to broadband has become even more crucial during the COVID-19 health crisis, connecting residents with services and information they would otherwise not have access to. It is also important to those who telework, senior citizens, fire and emergency workers, and students who are taking classes remotely. – **WHTM-TV, Harrisburg**

About 1,700 households in northwestern Washington County should have a chance to connect with high-speed internet access through \$496,750 allocated through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act block grant. Once installed to individual homes, the broadband connection will enable more people to work from home and receive educational instruction.

The Washington County commissioners voted unanimously Friday via teleconference to allocate the six-figure amount from the federal CARES Act, which will cover only the labor to install the major communication lines by the end of this year. Connectivity to individual households that want the service will be completed next year, said Brian Jeffers, chief executive officer of Advanced Telephone Systems Inc., doing business as Hickory Telephone Company Communications, with which the county commissioners entered into a professional services agreement. "We started today," Jeffers said Tuesday of the required work.

The six communities included in the professional services agreement approved by Washington County are Burgettstown, Eldersville, Independence, Joffre,

Langeloth and Slovan. The agreement called the six communities “unserved or underserved” by high-speed internet. “If you look at (a Federal Communications Commission) broadband map, it shows an area as ‘served’ if one house in a census block is served,” Jeffers said. “That’s what’s being targeted, places that have slipped through the cracks.”

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line, but rather than stick to places along Route 18, for example, Jeffers plans to have fiber optic lines jogging along rural roads to increase the potential customer base. “We tried to hit the most number of people who were unserved,” he said. He called the 1,700 households “a rough estimate. “Obviously it’s their choice if they want to get a different provider” or not connect at all.

Commissioner Nick Sherman talked with the Washington County Association of Township Officials about two months ago regarding important issues “and this was the big one,” he said of internet connectivity. “It will be much faster than what they have.” Since the COVID-19 pandemic struck this area in March, commissioners have heard from their constituents who were, for example, unable to participate in Zoom business meetings at home or saw their children’s educational instruction hindered.

The \$496,750 will cover the connections to towns, not individual households. “We’re doing all we can to meet the needs of our children learning remotely,” said commission Chairman Diana Irey Vaughan. – ***Washington (PA) Observer-Reporter***

