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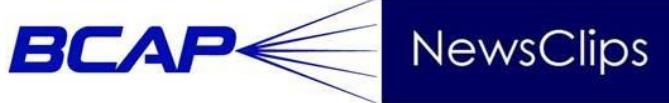
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September 11, 2020

ABB news release
Allegany County, Maryland selects Atlantic Broadband to provide Internet access to local school families

WJAC-TV, Johnstown Video: Sen. Wayne Langerholc (D-Clearfield), sponsor of SB 835, rural broadband funding legislation

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Bills to fund microgrid research, encourage diversity in telecom ownership OK'd by House panel

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette One year later, ACC Network access is still frustrating football fans

LightReading Footprint expansions boost cable's broadband growth

Lehighton Times-News Schuylkill County may face additional costs for 911 center

Blue Ridge Communications will provide internet, television and phone services to residents of Deerfield Township in the near future. Supervisors signed the agreement with Blue Ridge during the Sept. 1 meeting. Following a question and answer session, supervisors asked the company to provide a map that shows the current ends of the service area. It is expected that the service will be offered to former Westfield Antenna customers. Cost and location for other residents wishing to have the service will be calculated on an individual basis.
– ***Westfield (Tioga Co.) Free Press-Courier***

Gov. Tom Wolf on Thursday committed \$15 million in federal coronavirus aid money toward helping schools provide adequate, reliable broadband internet access to students who might otherwise struggle with remote learning. Wolf said the pandemic has forced schools to “rethink and rework how to provide instruction to students who are learning completely at home or in a hybrid model.” He said the funding will help fill in digital gaps as districts navigate new waters.

The money will fund a variety of approaches, including \$1.4 million for public libraries to expand their internet access footprint and invest in more Wi-Fi hotspots and \$8 million for a datacasting initiative that would use TV signals to deliver education content without Internet access. The money will also go toward getting devices to facilitate datacasting, like antenna and laptops. Another \$2 million will help provide adaptive and assistive technology – like tablet mounts, smart pens and other devices – to students who need it.

Continuing to help students learn during the pandemic, **@GovernorTomWolf** is dedicating \$15 million for schools to secure broadband, mobile hot spots, and other platforms that increase equitable access to remote learning. The pledge of \$15 million comes two days after the state Senate passed a bill to create a grant fund that would get broadband service to rural and under-served areas of the state. “The covid-19 pandemic has brought into view what we in rural Pennsylvania have known for some time – broadband is essential to

Bloomberg
Trump and Biden Head to Pennsylvania to Commemorate 9/11

Philadelphia Inquirer Editorial: As Nov. 3 approaches, voters deserve to have confidence in election system



connectivity, education, safety and productivity," said Sen. Wayne Langerholc Jr., who represents parts of Bedford, Cambria and Clearfield counties and who sponsored the bill.

The bill would provide money to improve access and limit funding to entities that have shown they actually have the ability to build and provide internet services. They would also have to fund 20% of the project. Matthew Splain, president of the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools, said a lot of rural areas still rely on DSL for internet access. Splain, superintendent of the Otto-Eldred School District in McKean County, said geography plays a large role in the reliability of access, and just because an area is shown as having coverage mean that it's actually reliable. "The farther you get up in the hollow, the worse the access is," he said.

In homes relying on DSL or other non-broadband internet, problems can be magnified if there are multiple students doing remote learning in the same house. "Then you're talking about twice as much or three times as much bandwidth," Splain said. "Ideally you find someone to run a fiber connection out to every household, but there's no incentive for companies to increase infrastructure knowing they're not going to recoup that." A Penn State study released in 2019 showed the digital divide across the state might be much larger than reported: there isn't a single county where at least 50% of the population received broadband connectivity, defined by the Federal Communications Commission as 25 megabits per second for downloads and 3 Mbps for uploads.

In Allegheny County, for example, the median broadband download speed was 20 Mbps, meaning 50% of the study respondents experienced faster speeds and 50% experienced slower speeds. In Westmoreland County, the median broadband download speed was 12.3 Mbps. In both cases, FCC maps show the counties as having 25/3 Mbps broadband service availability. – **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

Tom Ridge has been a member of the U.S. House, governor of Pennsylvania, and the first secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. He has also been [a Republican much longer](#) than President Donald Trump. Now co-chair of VoteSafe, Ridge flatly rejects Trump's [false claims that mail ballots lead to widespread fraud](#). "The massive fraud that people are talking about doesn't exist and won't exist," Ridge said this week, pointing to what attorney Ben Ginsberg wrote Wednesday in the Washington Post.

Ginsberg, who served as national counsel for the Republican presidential nominees in 2000, 2004, and 2012, [wrote that Trump lacked "hard evidence"](#) when he claimed systemic fraud four years ago, and still doesn't have any to offer. The Republican Party's old guard is pushing back here against a president whose conspiracy theories, polls show, are already shaking the confidence of some voters.

Ginsberg also knocked Trump for suggesting during [a rally in Westmoreland County](#) last week that [people should vote by mail and then "follow their ballot"](#) to the polling place on Election Day. "The Trump campaign is fighting to ensure every valid ballot across America counts as we work to deliver the free and fair elections Americans deserve," Trump campaign spokesperson Thea McDonald told Clout this week. Ridge is a longtime Trump critic, calling the president's rhetoric "disgusting" and "contemptible" [in an interview with Reuters](#) last week. "We have the unprecedented situation of a man who took the oath of office to support the Constitution but is directly challenging the result of the election prior to the outcome," Ridge said.

Ridge was one of 50 senior Republican national security officials who [signed a letter before the 2016 election](#) predicting Trump “would be the most reckless president in American history.” VoteSafe, a bipartisan group [pushing for safe ballot options](#) during [the coronavirus pandemic](#), wants Republicans and Democrats in Harrisburg to strike a deal on early processing of mail ballots before Election Day to prevent [the long delays in reporting results seen in June’s primary](#). – **Chris Brennan’s “Clout” column in *Philadelphia Daily News***

