

Whereas, libraries perform a significant role for communities across the United States in providing equitable access to information, closing the digital divide, and fostering educational, career and lifelong opportunities;

Whereas, high-speed Internet connections and robust Wi-Fi are essential for all libraries and underpin services on which our libraries and their communities across the country depend;

Whereas, students and lifelong learners require access to broadband services for education and distance learning and to develop information and technological literacy for success in school and the 21st century workforce;

Whereas, the E-rate program, created by Congress under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, has been instrumental in connecting America's public libraries to broadband since its implementation in 1998;

Whereas, the American Library Association has a long-standing commitment to universal and affordable access to advanced telecommunications services through the support of Universal Service and E-rate since its implementation in 1998;

Whereas, the 2014 E-rate Modernization Order opened new opportunities for rural and remote libraries that are furthest behind the FCC's broadband goals for libraries to gain access to high-speed fiber connections by increasing options to secure those connections and adopting rules to increase competition among broadband and internet service providers; and

Whereas, the 2014 E-rate Modernization Order increased available funding to \$3.9 billion thus ensuring libraries have adequate funding for Wi-Fi access throughout their buildings; and

