



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## O'Mara, Senate Republicans urge Governor Hochul to prioritize unserved and underserved areas for broadband funding: NYS in line for nearly \$665 million in federal high-speed Internet grants

THOMAS F. O'MARA July 10, 2023

| ISSUE: **BROADBAND ACCESS**



"Ensuring access to high-speed internet is one of New York government's fundamental responsibilities," said Senator O'Mara.

We have a responsibility to find a permanent solution. This recent announcement of funding provides an opportunity to solve this problem and ensure all unserved and underserved New Yorkers have access to high-speed internet.

**Albany, N.Y., July 10**—State Senator Tom O’Mara (R-C, Big Flats) today joined Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt and members of the Senate Republican Conference to urge Governor Kathy Hochul to prioritize unserved and underserved communities throughout New York State when allocating recently announced federal high-speed internet grants.

In a letter today to the governor (see attached copy), O’Mara and his colleagues wrote, “Today, more than ever, access to high-speed internet is a necessity for work, school, and more. We cannot rely upon the creativity of local communities to ensure people have access. We have a responsibility to find a permanent solution. This recent announcement of funding provides an opportunity to solve this problem and ensure all unserved and underserved New Yorkers have access to high-speed internet.”

O’Mara said, “Ensuring access to high-speed internet is one of New York government’s fundamental responsibilities. The distribution of this forthcoming federal aid must be accomplished equitably and fairly across the state, especially in those areas across our Upstate New York region that are unserved and underserved.”

The federal government announced a \$42.5 billion multi-state allocation to bring affordable and reliable high-speed Internet service to every community in the nation. New York State is expected to receive nearly \$665 million in funding to help expand affordable and reliable Internet access.

Many communities, particularly rural upstate communities, still have no access or extremely limited access to high-speed internet despite investments that were intended to ensure broadband access in every corner of the state. Many communities were left out when the previous programs were rolled out and still remain without access to affordable and reliable high-speed internet today. In order to not repeat the shortcomings of previous broadband programs, the Senate Republican Conference is advocating that the Executive ensure these communities are prioritized when dispersing these newly announced federal funds.