



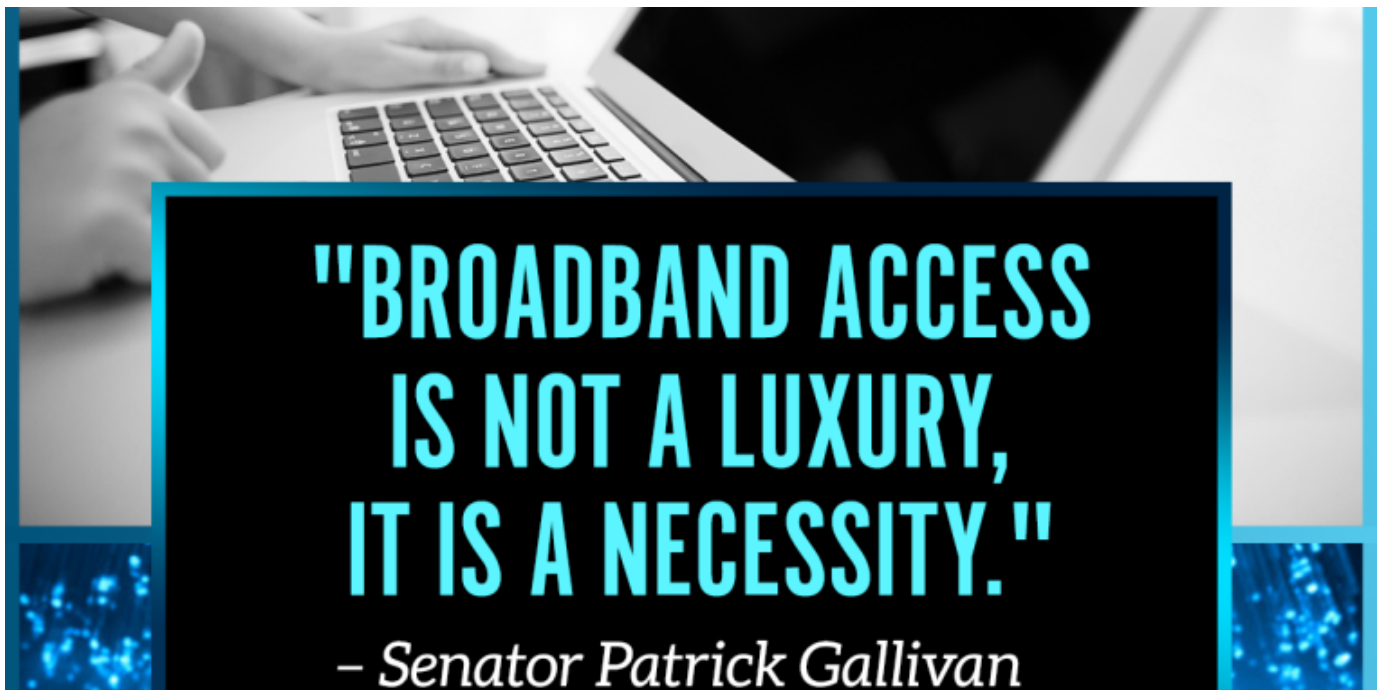
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Senator Gallivan Renews Call for Expansion of Broadband Access in NYS

JIM RANNEY March 15, 2021

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) is renewing his call for increased funding to expand broadband service throughout New York State, especially in rural communities where access remains a serious problem. Senator Gallivan says the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the need for universal broadband access and the lack of quality services in some regions.

"High-speed internet access is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Efforts to make broadband available to all New Yorkers have fallen short," Senator Gallivan said. "Thousands of students have struggled to keep up with their school work and businesses have suffered financially because of the lack of internet service in their communities. While the state has invested in the expansion of broadband, it has not done enough to help rural communities, where residents are cutoff from these essential services."

A recent independent report found that 726,000 K-12 students in the state lacked access during the pandemic. That is 27 percent of all students. The study also found that 18,000 teachers lack broadband access. That number is shocking and unacceptable.

On top of this, small business owners are relying on the internet more than ever to conduct business during the pandemic and need reliable service.

Senator Gallivan supported and helped pass a bi-partisan measure to commission a study that would find the regions of the state lacking broadband access and make providing it a top priority. The Governor vetoed it and did not include it in this year's budget proposal.

As negotiations continue on the 2022 state budget, Senator Gallivan said it is vital that all unserved rural communities be afforded such access and he urged the Legislature to renew its efforts.