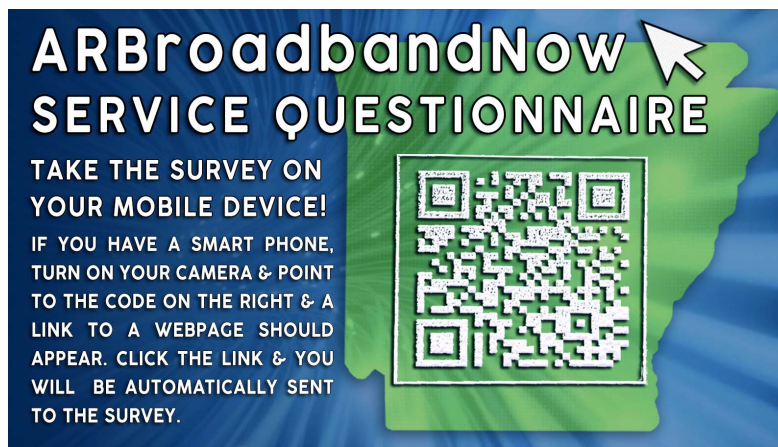




Arkansas House Newsletter

December 17, 2021

Improving Broadband in Arkansas



From filling out a job application to completing a homework assignment, the vast majority of our day-to-day lives are dependent on internet access. It is no longer a luxury, and now is a critical time for our state to close the digital divide.

Arkansas ranks 41st in state broadband access rating according to [Broadbandnow.com](https://broadbandnow.com).

The FCC currently defines broadband internet access as an always-on connection that provides 25Mbps download speeds and 3Mbps upload speeds. While most Arkansans living in the most populated counties have access, there are still counties in the state where less than half of the residents have access to broadband.

Recently, the Arkansas Legislative Council approved a contract for the Broadband Development Group to create a master plan for broadband development.

The group will submit a report with their research and recommendations in April.

This report will not only help guide the state in directing federal funds but will also assist members of the General Assembly in determining legislation needed to ensure Arkansans have affordable access in years to come.

Currently, the group is gathering data to assess the state's needs.

By the end of this year, the group will have held forums in 34 counties. They will hold forums in all 75 counties before their work is complete in April.

At these meetings, the group is hearing from small business owners, students, teachers, farmers and others about what their needs for broadband are and what obstacles they are encountering. We encourage you to attend one of these meetings if they are held in your county.

The group is also asking every Arkansan to fill out an online survey. The survey asks 12 questions regarding your internet usage, importance in your daily life, and the current speed of your service.

[ARBroadbandNow](#) on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) will post information about upcoming town halls.