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**COLORADO**  
Governor's Office of  
Information Technology

# Joint Technology Committee Hearing

December 12, 2023

Brandy Reitter, Executive Director Colorado Broadband Office  
Karen Pellegrin, Senior Manager, Technology Accessibility Program  
Michael McReynolds, Legislative Liaison



# Agenda

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- Colorado Broadband Office Updates
- Legislative Agenda for Broadband
- Questions
- OIT Accessibility Updates
- OIT Rulemaking Updates
- Questions

# WILDLY IMPORTANT GOALS

## WIG 1



Transform  
Technology  
in the State

## WIG 2



Expand  
Broadband  
Internet  
Access

## WIG 3



Advance  
Digital  
Government  
Services

## WIG 4



Improve  
Technology  
Accessibility

## WIG 5



Increase  
Employee  
Engagement



# Broadband Acronyms Defined



<b>CPF</b> - <i>Capital Projects Fund</i>	<b>BEAD</b> - <i>Broadband, Equity, Access, Deployment</i>
<b>CBO</b> - <i>Colorado Broadband Office</i>	<b>FCC</b> - <i>Federal Communications Commission</i>
<b>NTIA</b> - <i>National Telecommunications and Information Administration</i>	<b>BDB</b> - <i>Broadband Deployment Board</i>
<b>ISP</b> - <i>Internet Service Provider</i>	<b>SLFRF</b> - <i>State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund</i>
<b>ACP</b> - <i>Affordable Connectivity Program</i>	<b>USDA</b> - <i>U.S. Department of Agriculture</i>
<b>HCSM</b> - <i>High Cost Support Mechanism</i>	<b>Mbps</b> - <i>Megabytes Per Second</i>



# Colorado Broadband Office Updates



- **Capital Projects Fund (CPF) \$162M**
  - Application window closed Sept. 27.
  - December 2023 awards announced.
  
- **Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment Program (BEAD) \$826.5M**
  - Volume 1 submitted to the NTIA for approval.
  - Volume 2 submitted to the NTIA for approval.
  - Timeline for the challenge process starts Jan. 2024.
  - Subgrantee process begins the summer of 2024.



# Colorado Broadband Office Updates



- **Broadband Deployment Fund**
  - Last grant cycle before the Sunset Review begins Dec. 14, 2023 with applications closing on Feb. 14, 2024.
  - There is approximately \$14M in funding available for this cycle and awards are expected next fall.
- **Other Programs**
  - **Digital Access Plan:** Draft is complete and will be available for public comment.
  - **Workforce Development Plan:** Plan is complete and received positive responses.
  - **Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP):** 236,238 households enrolled with a 31.17% participation rate representing \$6.9M in investments (goal reached).
  - **Engagement:** Continue to host community/industry roundtables and topic specific webinars.



# Legislative Agenda



- The Broadband Deployment Fund (BDF)/BDB and its functions were reviewed in a sunset report which suggests the functions should continue to exist and suggests minimal changes
- However, changes to the BDF in 2024 can help fill the remaining funding gaps to serve Colorado with affordable high-speed broadband
  - Filling these remaining gaps is essential to meeting the Governor's Broadband Goals by 2027



# Legislative Agenda



- Expand the eligible uses of funding from the BDF by creating a two-tier grantmaking structure:
  - Tier One - 60 percent of the available BDF fund focused on the state's most pressing broadband needs
  - Tier Two - 40 percent of the available BDF fund focused on other unfunded broadband and telecommunication needs
- Replace the Broadband Deployment Board with a Broadband Deployment Grant Committee
- Amend outdated definitions and reporting requirements, repeal internet speed requirements for broadband (alignment with [SB23-183](#))





# Questions on Broadband



# OIT Accessibility Updates



# Accessibility Accomplishments



- Agency Accessibility Implementation Plans: **51% combined percentage** complete
  - 3 agencies over 80% completion of their plan
- OIT Vendor Procurement Vetting Process implemented
  - Partnership with State Contracts Office on Accessibility
- Empathy Lab launched with a Community Steering Committee to help inform on digital accessibility from the lens of lived experiences
- Improved partnerships with Google and SIPA/Tyler to address accessibility issues and improve overall accessibility of state websites
- Average overall Siteimprove score for website accessibility of all agencies is **84.7%** with all agency scores above 80% and the top score at 96.9%!



# TAP Project Highlights



- Launched **2 online Accessibility Fundamentals courses** for State agencies
- Created **6 Accessibility Center of Excellence (ACE) groups** to leverage accessibility knowledge, skills and resources between state agencies
- Launched **Statewide Accessibility Coordinator Group** to leverage plan implementation knowledge and strategies between agency accessibility leaders
- **Aira Visual Interpreter Service** Launched in State Parks and State Education Campuses
- Launched **new software tools** for agencies to remediate Google products, websites, applications and PDFs
- Created **Accessibility Toolkits** for Vendor Procurement and Website Compliance



# OIT Rulemaking Update



**Summer 2023**

SB23-244 was signed into law

**December 2023**

OIT announces a public rulemaking hearing

**January 2024**

Public rulemaking hearing and rule adoption

Public input

**Autumn 2023 to Today**

Rule development

Public input

**December 2023**

Invitation for written public comments

Public input

**March 2024**

Publication of adopted rules, rules go into effect

[OIT Rulemaking Steps and How to Participate](#) (doc) | [OIT Rules Website](#)



# Summary of Draft Rule Topics



- Reflecting existing and proposed ADA and 508 rules
- Categories of exceptions with expectation to provide alternate access when requested
- Limiting conformance to documents in current use and going forward
- Providing a transition time for applying updated standards
- Allowing public entities to use the product that best meets the accessibility standards and their business needs when no commercially available product fully conforms
- Outlining a complaint process for individuals experiencing accessibility issues to pursue and allowing for reasonable time to address and cure the accessibility issues
- Allowing reasonable modifications and accommodations when full conformance with the accessibility standards would result in an undue burden



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**Questions**