

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Representative Udell Condemns Changes to Federal Broadband Program**

MADISON, Wis. – Today, NTIA released changes to the federal \$42-billion BEAD program to expand broadband access to rural and underserved areas.

Representative Randy Udell (D-47<sup>th</sup> District) released the following statement:

“Wildly, bafflingly incompetent – the Trump Administration has torn apart a five-year program that was months away from having shovels in the ground to finally connect rural and underserved areas to high-speed internet.

“Commerce Secretary Lutnick’s favorite phrase? ‘Cheapest.’ BEAD grants are now required to go to the cheapest bidders, licensed or unlicensed, regardless of quality or customer affordability. BEAD will now fund shoddy, slow, unreliable satellite providers building temporary infrastructure with no oversight for at least four years.

“The biggest irony? These changes will cost more, not less. All the dollars Wisconsin used to prepare for BEAD are now wasted. Dollars that broadband providers spent on grant applications are wasted. Even more dollars will be wasted reworking a five-year program to make these changes by a ninety-day deadline.

“RDOF, Trump’s first-term federal internet expansion, failed. This is RDOF 2. They are making all the same mistakes, and rural America will pay the price.”

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