

# Cablefax Daily™

Monday — July 13, 2020

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 31 / No. 133

## Log Jam: Where Congress Does, And Does Not, Come Together on Broadband

Plenty of lawmakers are lining up with their plans to expand broadband access, but few bills are checking the boxes that would connect the opposite sides of the aisle. The House passed a \$15 trillion infrastructure bill, the Moving Forward Act, at the start of the month that would incorporate Rep *James Clyburn's* Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act. The measure proposes investing \$80bln over five years to deploy broadband infrastructure, \$5bln over that period to low-interest financing of broadband and a \$50 monthly discount on internet plans for low-income Americans. Sen *Amy Klobuchar* (D-MN) introduced a companion bill to the Clyburn legislation, but its chances in the Senate are slim due to the other measures included, such as a \$494bln green transformation package that would establish federal programs to cut greenhouse gas emissions from transportation projects. House Republicans called the massive bill the "My Way or the Highway" bill and Senate Republicans quickly joined in the chorus of voices opposing the legislation. "House Democrats appear addicted to pointless political theater," Senate majority leader *Mitch McConnell* said of the bill. "So naturally, this nonsense is not going anywhere in the Senate. It will just join the list of absurd House proposals that were only drawn up to show fealty to the radical left." The White House has also criticized the bill, saying it was full of "wasteful" Green New Deal initiatives. Republicans have questioned why broadband initiatives were even included in the transportation and infrastructure bill, but Rep *Mike Doyle* (D-PA) believes those two subjects belong in the same conversation. "When we talk about infrastructure, we're not just talking about roads and bridges. When you think about it, broadband really is the infrastructure of the future," Doyle said in an interview for **C-SPAN's** "The Communicators" series this week. "It's critical that we not just put money to get broadband to underserved areas. What we're talking about is upgrading the entire system to increase its speed and efficiency." There are a few things both sides of the aisle can join in on in the meantime. Sens *Joe Manchin* (D-WV) and *Susan Collins* (R-ME) are planning on introducing the Hotspots and Online Technology and Services Procurement for our Tribes and States (HOTSPOTS) Act during the next Senate session. The bill would create a 2-year, \$160mln hotspot pilot program with a minimum allotment of \$1.6mln per state to allow states, tribes and territories to purchase and distribute connected devices to libraries in low-income and rural areas. In a similar vein, Reps *Tom O'Halleran* (D-AZ) and *Bill Johnson* (R-OH) introduced the Broadband Adoption and Opportunity Act earlier this

We are so proud of our industry and the many ways companies are responding to the pandemic. Free internet, fresh content, employee safety and much more.

The Cablefax Editorial Team is reporting on vital industry updates every day. We want to hear from you so please reach out to share your news and stories.

**Content. Community. Daily.**

Amy Maclean, Editorial Director,  
amaclean@accessintel.com or 301.354.1760

**The Collapse of Theatrical Windows?:** With theaters shuttering, will day-and-date releases become a thing? **Universal Pictures** is the first out of the gate, announcing "Trolls World Tour" will be available April 10 for a rental. Other in-release movie titles are set to be available as soon as this Friday. The movies will be available on **Comcast, Sky** and a "broad range of on-demand partners." Titles to be made available include "The Man" and "Emma" with a suggested retail price of \$19.99 in the US.

Tuesday — March 17, 2020 What the Industry Reads First Volume 31 / No. 050

**For Now: Providers Set Aside Disputes During Coronavirus Outbreak**

As they face the common enemy that is the coronavirus pandemic, **Cox Media Group** and **DISH** have set aside their retrans dispute for now so that **DISH** can resume its carriage of 10 CMG stations in New York, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Louisiana, California, Mississippi and Idaho. No word on how long the truce will last.

# Cablefax Daily™

Friday — March 13, 2020 What the Industry Reads First Volume 31 / No. 050

**New Normal: Companies Roll Out Contingency Plans in Face of Covid-19**

With a growing number of students and employees working from home, it's mission critical for the nation's broadband providers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Operators big and small are up-ending their day-to-day operations to ensure service to their customers.

Wednesday — March 18, 2020 What the Industry Reads First

**Covering Covid-19: Content Companies Step Up Efforts**

Programmers are shuffling schedules to respond to the coronavirus crisis. **The Weather Channel** is airing live programming at 50 minutes past the hour to share educational content. **Pledge** is airing live programming due to school closures. Topics include why thunder happens, how rainbows form and more. Programming is scheduled for Friday at 2pm.

**From the Commission:** Another 116 broadband and telephone service providers have taken the **Partners Keep Americans Connected Pledge**, agreeing to take specific steps to keep Americans connected during the coronavirus pandemic. Some notable names taking the pledge include **Hotwire Communications**, **Midwest**

# EVERY YEAR, CABLEFAX RECOGNIZES THE TOP MULTI-ETHNIC EXECUTIVES IN THE INDUSTRY

Help Cablefax celebrate the women and men who are shaping the industry and opening doors for others across all areas of business.

As always, it's free to nominate candidates for the Diversity List.

## NEW for 2020!

### INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES

#### Diverse Executive of the Year

A diverse executive with outstanding business results over the last year. All departments and job functions are eligible.

#### D&I Champion

An executive whose contributions to diversity initiatives and overall D&I leadership has made an important impact within the cable & broadband industry and inspired others to step up their games.

#### D&I Mentor of the Year

An individual whose extraordinary mentoring effort has made a measurable impact in helping to increase the number of low- to mid-level diverse executives that have risen to senior roles.

#### LGBTQ+ Executive of the Year

An executive who identifies as an LGBTQ+ individual and embodies excellence in leadership, community service and overall business acumen.

#### The Trailblazers

This select group of diverse executives exhibits outstanding innovation, creativity and passion—all while making enormous contributions that take their companies to the next level.

#### Thrivers Under 30

These young and diverse up-and-comers represent the future of the industry, which depends on their energy, new ideas and unique perspectives to drive success.

### ORGANIZATION AWARDS

#### Advertising Campaign

Recognizing an advertising campaign for a brand, service or product that appeals to diverse customers or increases a company's outreach to minority or other diverse communities.

#### Community Outreach

Recognizing specific community outreach efforts related directly to helping underserved communities or promoting a more diverse community.

#### Diversity in Business Award

Recognizing a for-profit initiative that ties diversity objectives to a new product or service that bolstered the company's bottom line.

#### D&I Mentoring Program

Recognizing a successful diversity promotion program that has been in place for at least 2 years and has made a sustained and measurable impact on a company's ratio of diverse employees.

#### Public Affairs Campaign

Recognizing a public affairs media, lobbying or awareness campaign (local, regional or national) designed to create awareness of a company's diversity efforts, charitable contributions or other initiatives aimed at a more diverse and inclusive world.

## The DIVERSITY List

PRESENTED BY CABLEFAX



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September 29<sup>th</sup>

TO ADVERTISE, CONTACT:  
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#### Recruiting Program

Recognizing a successful diversity recruiting program that has made a sustained and measurable impact on a company's ratio of diverse employees across the entity or within a specific division.

## BEGIN YOUR NOMINATIONS!

[www.cablefaxdiversity.com](http://www.cablefaxdiversity.com)

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week, which would offer low-income students and residents with refurbished internet-access devices. The **NTIA** would create a five-year pilot program that would work with states, tribes and the **FCC** on the best way to increase adoption rates among the underserved. The bill has received the backing of **NCTA**, which said it would encourage greater attention on the factors impeding broadband adoption through the development of best practices. Lawmakers will attempt to get as many of these bills through ahead of the November election. In a slew of policy proposals released this week by Democratic presidential nominee *Joe Biden* and Sen *Bernie Sanders* (I-VT), the pair said a Democrat-led administration would prevent states from blocking municipalities and rural co-ops from building publicly-owned broadband networks and increase federal support for municipal broadband. Also on the table are more subsidies for low-income Americans to access broadband through the Lifeline program. Biden also took a clear stance on net neutrality that's a stark contrast from that of Republicans. "Democrats will restore the FCC's clear authority to take strong enforcement action against broadband providers who violate net neutrality principles through blocking, throttling, paid prioritization, or other measures that create artificial scarcity and raise consumer prices for this vital service," the proposal said.

**Charter Raises Broadcast TV Price:** Charter is raising the broadcast TV fee on its cable plans from \$13.50 a month to \$16.45, beginning in August. The fee for streaming is rising from \$6 to \$8.95. Spectrum is also increasing the cost of its most cable TV packages. The company's most popular "TV Select" package is expected to go up by \$1.50/month to \$73.99/month. The company said that customers paying a promotional price for a Spectrum TV package won't see a price change until the end of their promo. "Spectrum is committed to continuously enhancing our communication products, providing customers value-driven, superior connectivity services. We are delivering faster broadband speeds and improved performance and reliability, all as the average price per megabit per second and gig consumed declines dramatically," the company said in a statement. "Conversely, programmers annually raise programming fees to deliver the same content, leading to higher costs across the entire industry. The increase we are passing through to viewers is a direct result of these rising programming costs. Similarly, we will pass through any rebates we receive from the loss of live sports during COVID-19." The changes were first spotted by *Stop the Cap*.

**Cox Employees Asked to Stay Home Until January:** Cox Enterprises is asking all employees who can work from home to continue to do so until at least Jan 11, 2021. This includes cable operator **Cox Communications**. A spokesperson described the date as a target that could change as public health experts learn more about COVID-19, a vaccine becomes available and business needs evolve. "We continue to monitor the outbreak daily, and we look at factors such as the number of cases in a city/region, infection trends, CDC guidelines, local government response, vaccine development timelines and school and day care availability," the Cox rep said. "The health of our employees and safely maintaining critical connectivity for customers working and learning from home remain priorities during the crisis."

**Ratings:** Hallmark Channel's original series "Good Witch" ended its sixth season Sunday night, averaging 2.8mln total viewers for its duration, the highest-rated season of the entire series.

**Programming:** The 20th anniversary season of Major League Lacrosse will air on **ESPN2** and **ESPN+**, kicking off July 18. The abbreviated season will include 15 games, followed by a four-team playoff on July 25 with a championship game July 26 at 2pm on ESPN2. -- **HBO Max** is creating a new original DC drama. The series will be set in the world "The Batman" filmmaker *Matt Reeves* is creating for the feature film, launching a new Batman universe across multiple platforms. -- **BBC America** is launching the programming event "Wild Life Week," a week dedicated to animal content around the world. Beginning July 20 at 6am, viewers can catch marathons of series such as "Best of Seven Worlds," "One Planet" and the original "Planet Earth" series. On July 25 at 8pm, doc special "Wild India" premieres. On Aug 1 at 8pm, viewers can tune into the US premiere of "EarthFlight." -- "The Cowboy Way" will return to **INSP** on July 29 at 9pm for Season 7.

**People:** **MediaKind** named *Matt McConnell* as its new CEO. He'll report directly to the board, including former CEO *Angel Ruiz*, who is now chmn. McConnell was previously svp, gm of **Comcast** Technology Solutions. -- **WarnerMedia** named *Christina Sulebakk* gm of HBO Europe, effective immediately. She had been vp, CMO and head of distribution for the division and will replace *Hervé Payan*, who is leaving the company at the end of August.

## Cablefax Dashboard

### Hero of the Week



**Amy Leifer, Xandr:** As the city of New York entered lockdown, Leifer, Xandr's evp, operations & services, began looking for ways to use her skills to support frontline workers during this difficult and unprecedented time. Leifer and her daughter, Emma, launched [@washedbyem](#), a tie dye brand whose profits are used to make tie dye scrubs for local nurses. As Xandr shifted its volunteer efforts online due to social distancing, employees looking to give back to the community coordinated with Leifer to purchase tie dye sweatshirts created by her daughter to support the cause. After just a few short weeks, thanks to the efforts of Leifer and Emma, they were able to purchase and tie dye 30 pairs of scrubs for the nurses at Nyack Hospital in New York.

### Tweet Tweet



### Research

- > Only 35% of Americans aged 18-29 are following news about the presidential candidates very or fairly closely. That compares with 46% of those ages 30-49 and 60% of those ages 50-64.
- > The gap closes when it comes to news of peaceful protests, with 83% of the youngest group following the news very or fairly closely.
- > 38% of Americans say the COVID-19 pandemic has been exaggerated into a bigger deal than it really is while 21% say the situation has been downplayed. 40% believe the outbreak has been approached about right.

(Source: [Pew Research](#))

### Quotable

“What is truly exciting about 5G is that people can see in it the future come to life. It represents the culmination of what was once only imagined in old Hollywood movies — a universe where wireless technology is embedded and ingrained in nearly everything. A 5G wireless world will no longer be about one, siloed device carried in a pocket or purse. If the Internet served to connect people and places through specialized devices, 5G will take it a step further to serve as the first real wireless standard to seamlessly connect everything else.”

– **FCC commish Michael O’Rielly speaking at the NJ & NY Wireless Associations’ 2020 Update Webinar**

## We Want to Feature Your Heroes!

On Fridays, Cablefax will feature a local hero. We’re looking for stories of employees who are going above and beyond. Maybe they are volunteering in their community, sewing mask covers for hospitals, spearheading supply donations, etc.



Please send a photo and 150-200 words about the person to [amaclean@cablefax.com](mailto:amaclean@cablefax.com)

Contact Olivia Murray at [omurray@accessintel.com](mailto:omurray@accessintel.com) to sponsor this feature section