

## BY THE NUMBERS

Reports from Evergreen Economics show that the industry's push for better efficiency in set-top boxes, routers and other equipment has been paying off. Approximately \$4.36 billion was saved on consumer electricity bills in 2025, and 16.9 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions were avoided as well. Since 2012—when the initiative began—\$26.5 billion has been saved on those electricity bills while preventing 126 million metric tons of CO2 emissions.

## SHOT CLOCKS DIVIDE CARRIERS AND CITIES

Everyone knows that communications providers and the associations representing them are all for the **FCC's** [proposed rules](#) to streamline permitting fees by state and local governments. The Commission's docket has countless examples of why ISPs support its proposals to set a 120-day deadline for processing wireline broadband infrastructure permits and to count in-kind compensation as permit fees. And some think the agency should go even further.

The FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking proposes a presumptive 120-day shot clock for state and local governments to process wireline telecom broadband infrastructure permits. **ACA Connects** said it's OK with the 120-day deadline for major projects, but thinks 45 days should be the limit for simpler projects. **Verizon** points to how Ohio, Hawaii and Wisconsin already require action within 60 days, and North Carolina within 30 days. It wants the FCC to adopt a 60-day deadline for standard applications, with 90 days available for genuinely complex projects involving major construction or environmental review. **AT&T** backs the same split.

Verizon also wants the FCC to go beyond its proposal to allow carriers to credit the dollar value of in-kind contributions against any safe harbor fee levels and instead prohibit mandatory in-kind contributions.

"State DOTs have imposed fiber-access demands as conditions of unrelated high-



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way permits,” the company said. It also cited a New Jersey municipality that demanded six dark fiber strands and overlash rights, and an Illinois village that sought a 50% service discount as a permit condition.

Verizon pointed to wild swings in right-of-way fees as proof the current system has nothing to do with actual costs: Sunnyvale, California, charges \$28 per linear foot annually for facilities in the right-of-way, while Chicago charges \$100 per linear foot for conduit use. Michigan, by contrast, caps its fee at five cents per foot.

The dozens of comments on the proposed rules, which were due Monday, offer plenty of real-world examples. **NCTA** shared how some state laws have different permitting rules for utilities and their affiliates than for unaffiliated broadband providers when it comes to deploying wireline telecom infrastructure using existing utility easements. It shared how in one instance, a utility refused to permit an NCTA member and instead forced the provider to seek more than 1,500 separate private easements. After working on it for months, the provider walked away from the project, citing scalability limitations and unsustainable costs.

In one Midwestern county, changing and unpublished engineering requirements stretched out the authorization process for about 18 months, which ultimately contributed to an **INCOMPAS** member abandoning the remaining project.

For every provider that’s in favor of the FCC rules, there’s a city or municipality fighting them. They don’t want federal preemption of a regime they believe works just fine. Plus, they don’t believe the FCC has the authority to adopt such sweeping rules regarding state/local telecom rights-of-way regulation. The proposed rules hinge on Section 253 of the Communications Act. Local governments believe that Congress gave the FCC only narrow preemption power under Section 253 and preserved local authority over rights-of-way management.

But that reading doesn’t hold up, industry groups argue. INCOMPAS, ACA Connects, NCTA and others contend that local governments are conflating two distinct FCC functions: preempting a specific state or local rule case-by-case, and interpreting what Section 253 means in the first place—the latter falling under the FCC’s general rulemaking authority in Section 201(b). The groups point to the FCC’s own 2018 Moratoria Order, upheld by the Ninth Circuit, as precedent for exactly this split. They also argue the practical stakes are too high to ignore: with roughly 89,000 state and local governments under the FCC’s jurisdiction, preempting bad permitting rules one jurisdiction at a time would be, as one court put it, “a nearly impossible administrative undertaking.”

AT&T urged the FCC to move fast to adopt final rules, declaring that “every day that these barriers remain in place is a day that broadband deployment is delayed, capital is diverted from communities that need it most, and American consumers and businesses are denied the benefits of next-generation connectivity.”

## INTRODUCING TRUMP TV

As TV networks continue to boycott President *Trump* for his removal of **CNN**, **MS Now** and *Politico* from the White House press corps, a new outlet was introduced: **Trump TV**. First announced Monday night, it’s a 24/7 [stream](#) that’s available via the White House’s **YouTube** channel. It’ll feature speeches, remarks and other news related to

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the Trump administration (stuff one might see on other networks with normal pool reporting), with the tagline “The Essentials Station.” Axios describes it as a livestream of the administration’s “greatest hits,” with clips of past events as well as current doings. Around 1,500 people were watching the stream when **CFX** tuned in Tuesday afternoon. “Not every big moment has made it on your tv, now it can,” the White House [wrote](#) on X. There aren’t many details beyond that, and we don’t suspect there will be any talks of large-scale carriage agreements, but we’ll keep an eye out just in case.

## NCTA’S BRIAN DIETZ SIGNS OFF

After nearly 24 years at **NCTA**, *Brian Dietz* will exit his role as SVP, Strategic Communications at the end of the month. NCTA will announce plans for Dietz’s successor in the coming weeks. It’s a transition months in the making. The communications veteran has guided the association through multiple leadership changes, joining when *Robert Sachs* was CEO. Dietz worked with former CEO *Kyle McSarrow* and was promoted to his present role during *Michael Powell*’s tenure. He’s helped current CEO *Cory Gardner* through his first year at NCTA (today is literally his one-year anniversary). One of the hallmarks of Dietz’s NCTA legacy is ushering communications into an era of storytelling. He was the lead producer and originator of two multiple-award-winning documentary short films, “Every Last Mile” and “After the Storm,” which showcased the impact of the cable and broadband industry on communities across the country. Other accomplishments include leading the rebrand of The National Cable & Telecommunications Association to NCTA – The Internet & Television Association—and surviving nearly two decades of net neutrality debate!

## COLORADO’S BEAD BOUNCE

The **NTIA**’s \$42.5 billion BEAD program has been riddled with hiccups, the latest coming in Colorado. The state’s broadband office announced that it revoked six grants totaling north of \$100 million from **Maverix Broadband**, citing financial mismanagement and misuse of grant funding. The Colorado Broadband Office said it received two whistleblower reports back in May regarding Maverix’s use of grant funding, causing CBO to preemptively pause further payments. The subsequent investigation found that Maverix billed the government for services and equipment that it never obtained and also failed to pay vendors. Colorado officials are now seeking to recover \$3.2 million in grant funds via ongoing receivership and bankruptcy proceedings. However, CBO noted that no BEAD money was given to Maverix yet, and it hadn’t signed any BEAD-related contracts. CBO is now working with federal partners to reopen the approximately 10,000 locations that were given to Maverix and plan a rebidding process.

## HUB FINDS THE ‘DEFAULT’ STREAMING ADVANTAGE

SVODs are in a constant pursuit of battling churn, and recent findings from **Hub Entertainment Research** place more importance on being first—as in, the first streamer a user launches when they’re consuming content. Hub’s “Decoding the Default” study showed that viewers are 2-6X more likely to keep a single streaming service if it’s their default source versus a product they use occasionally. For example, among all **Netflix** users, 28% indicated they’d keep it if they could only access one SVOD, but for those who call Netflix their default app, that figure spikes to 62%. That’s compared to **Disney+**, whose gap is 10% and 61%, respectively, and **YouTube Premium**, where 80% of default users would keep the offering (live linear TV checked in at 46% and 72%). Being the default creates a long-term customer relationship as well, with 69% of survey respondents noting that they’ve subscribed to their current default source for more than two years. Hub found that one potential reason for the longevity is because most users spent time creating profiles, watchlists and customizing apps to make it “their own.” Hub conducted its survey in August across 1,600 U.S. TV viewers between ages 16-74.

## FIBER FRENZY

**Optimum** will soon deliver symmetrical internet speeds of up to 8 Gigs in the communities of Carterville and Webb City, Missouri. The launch is part of the operator’s network enhancement strategy to expand access to multi-gig speeds across approximately 65% of its footprint by 2028. The ISP also announced it will expand its FTTH network in East Brunswick and South River, New Jersey, by early 2027, with **Optimum Mobile** service already live in the area. — **FiberLight** unveiled plans to build a high-capacity duct and fiber corridor in Texas from Midland to El Paso. It’s part of a \$500 million investment and will result in a roughly 300-mile development that’ll support high-capacity bandwidth demands from regional and hyper-scale data center operations, as well as cross-border connectivity, long-haul routing and regional infrastructure.