

## COMMITTEE REPORT

### **Telecommunications & Technology Committee Report: Submitted 5/22/24 by Co-Chair -Teresa Taylor, Lummi**

Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians -

2024 Midyear Convention

Canyonville, OR

#### **DISCUSSION**

**Tuesday, 5/21/2024 – 1:30pm – 3:15pm**

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#### **AT&T Specialist – Presented by Angel Benally, AT&T Tribal Affairs Specialist**

- Angel Benally, Tribal Affairs Specialist with FirstNet, AT&T, advances FirstNet’s mission to support Tribal public safety agencies in Indian Country. Angel works with Tribal leadership and public safety stakeholders to implement connectivity for agencies across the country. Angel is from Dine’ Nation. She graduated from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado with a bachelor’s in political science. She is an alumna of the Native American Political Leadership Program at George Washington University and the AT&T Center for Indigenous Politics and Policy in the District of Columbia.
- The Future of FirstNet: Investing in America’s First Responders  
<http://firstnet.gov/newsroom/videos/future-firstnet-investing-americas-first-responders>
- Public Private Partnership – As AT&T reaches near completion of its initial band 14 infrastructure buildout,, the FirstNet Authority turns it focus to solutions
- FirstNet and Tribal Nations
  - 130 Tribal Nations across the country are on FirstNet
  - 24,000+ connections by Tribal and federal users serving tribal communities
  - 550+ FirstNet towers serving tribal lands
  - 1700 FirstNet band spectrum sites
  - 64% increase in Tribal lands coverage
  - \$1Billion for the next 10 years

#### **Reinvestment and the Emergency Management Resources guide – Presented by Jasper Bruner, Senior Public Safety Advisor-Tribal Liaison, FirstNet**

- First Responder Network – FirstNet, built with AT&T is the only network built with and for first responders and those who support them. The First Responder Network Authority and network partner, AT&T have launched a 10-year investment initiative that will keep first responder communications at the forefront of innovation. These include 5G upgrades, coverage enhancements and mission-critical services.

- Jasper Bruner, Senior Public Safety Advisor/Tribal Liaison, works and lives at Makah.
- A RFP was put out 8 years ago and AT&T won the contract
- They use Spectrum Band 14
- \$8 Billion investment initiative by the FirstNet Authority to evolve and expand FirstNet within 10 years.
- Tribes, territories, and rural areas are receiving the investment now
- Emergency Management Resource Guide - [FirstNet Authority Emergency Management Guide](#)

### **Introduction of the Washington State Broadband Office (WSB) Executive Director - Aaron Wheeler**

- Governor Jay Inslee appointed Aaron Wheeler to serve as director of the Washington State Broadband Office within the Department of Commerce. Wheeler is an information technology professional with 18 years of experience working with the Suquamish Tribe's government.
- <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/news/wheeler-appointed-to-wsbo/>
- FCC Broadband Mapping – the WSBO, Community Economic Revitalization Board and Public Works Board are encouraging the public to review and verify or challenge the information for their location on the recently published FCC National Broadband Map. The accuracy of this map is critical for future broadband funding allocations. Step by step guidance is made available <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/washington-statewide-broadband-act/fcc-broadband-mapping/>
- Internet for All – Broadband, Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity (DE) plans establish eligibility for federal funding to delivery significant investments for expanding broadband access and to help close the digital divide.
- <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/f3ozsij7t4eb2783e2wntfn0hjl8ns2o>

## Wednesday, 5/22/2024 – 8:45am to 10:30am

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### **FCC Update – Presented by Bambi Kraus, Office of Native American Policy (ONAP) Chief**

- Affordable Connectivity Program Update – The final month for full ACP benefits for existing enrollees was April 2024. If you qualified and enrolled before February 8, 2024, you would continue to receive your regular monthly discount. May 2024 and beyond – the program's future hangs in uncertainty.
- Lifeline – Affordable Services for low-income consumers – Lifeline offers an enhanced benefit to consumers who live on qualifying tribal lands: up to \$25/month extra is available for subscribers on qualifying Tribal lands (up to \$34.25/month total)
- E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries – On July 20, 2023, the FCC adopted a Report and Order amending program rules to enhance Tribal applicants' access to the E-Rate program. FCC Chairwoman Rosenworcel also announced the extension of the Tribal Libraries Pilot Program for Funding Year 2024.
- Eligibility – The Tribal Libraries Pilot Program was created for Tribal libraries that are new to the E-Rate program or had challenges applying to the E-Rate program in the past and were

unsuccessful. Tribal libraries must be able to demonstrate that they have three basic characteristics of a library, including:

- Regularly scheduled hours
- Staff
- Materials for library users

Tribal government entities can designate a library as a Tribal library via Tribal resolution. Tribal libraries may also work with the state library administrative agency where they are located.

In FY2024 (which begins July 1, 2024), TCU libraries will be eligible for E-Rate funding as long as they also serve as a public library for their community to meet the characteristic of library outlined above.

- Emergency Alert System -

## Resolutions

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- No resolutions to present.

### **ADOPTED AND RECOMMENDED TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Minutes/Report submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Chair

#### **Telecommunications Mission Statement**

The Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians, Telecommunications Technology Committee, will work to promote the acquisition and utilization of appropriate telecommunications technology among Northwest Indian communities to enhance the economic, educational, political, social, and cultural goals of Tribal governments and organizations.

NOTE: Co-Chair Tiffany Circle, Colville, was unable to attend.