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**News &
Updates**

MAY 2025

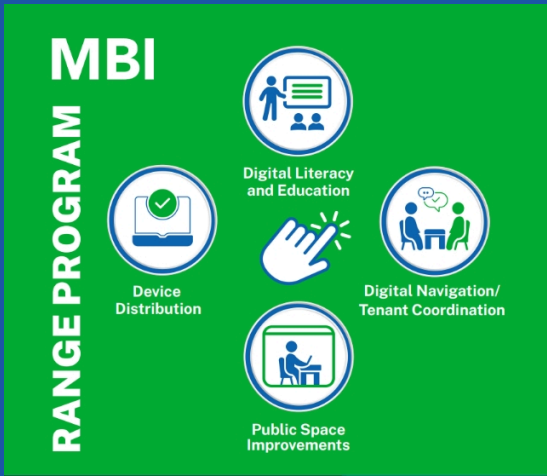
Federal Government Suspends the DEA Capacity Grant Program

On May 9, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) notified the Massachusetts Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED), administering entity for the Digital Equity Act (DEA) Capacity Grant Program, that its \$14.1 million grant to Massachusetts was terminated. Similar termination notices were sent to all DEA Capacity Grant Program awardees.

With this funding, the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) had opened the new Launchpad Program and expanded the Municipal Digital Equity Planning and Implementation Programs. These programs are now suspended.

The DEA Capacity Grant Program, created through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021, had included \$1.44 billion in funding to all 50 States, Washington, D.C., and U.S. Territories. This program was one of three grant programs included in the \$2.75 billion Digital Equity Act.

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RANGE Program Launch

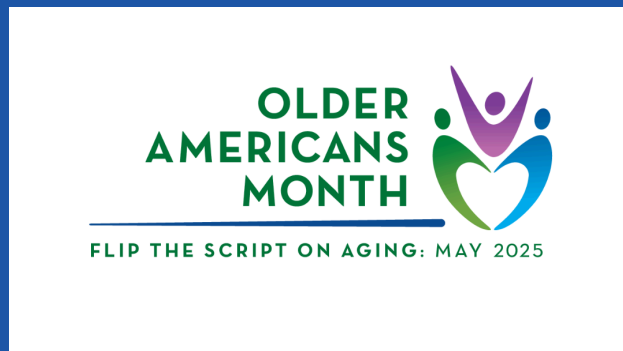
The Retrofit Ancillary Grantee (RANGE) Program is bringing \$8 million in new funding for housing operators participating in the Residential Retrofit Program. These grants will support digital literacy, device distribution, public space improvements and tenant coordination, ensuring residents can fully benefit from upgraded broadband infrastructure. With multiple award cycles planned, there will be more opportunities to apply.

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Round IV of the Residential Retrofit Program is Now Open

The Residential Retrofit Program Round IV's Request for Proposal (RFP) includes over 15,000 units of affordable housing representing over 330 properties across 66 cities and towns. This program expands access to reliable, affordable broadband for low-income residents by funding critical infrastructure upgrades in public and affordable housing. Grants are awarded to Internet Service Providers (ISP) in partnership with housing operators to install, own, and maintain fiber optic cabling directly to households.

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Older Americans Month: Flipping the Script on Aging with New Digital Skills

Since 2023, AgeSpan and the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative have been on a mission to flip the script on aging by empowering older adults to learn new skills and gain confidence in using the internet and devices. Together, with nine providers, they offer opportunities for people over the age of 60 to get connected online based on

personal goals, whether that be leaning to video call grandchildren, participate in online classes, or access telehealth services.

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Ecosystem Updates / Events

Massachusetts Digital Equity Coalition Members Provide Testimony on Beacon Hill

On Tuesday, May 6, members from the Massachusetts Digital Equity Coalition, including the Alliance for Digital Equity in Western Massachusetts, City of Boston, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, and Vinfen provided testimony on the importance of low-cost internet before the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy.

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Governor Healey Unveils ReiMagine Aging 2030 and Digital Access Needs for Older Adults

Governor Healey, Lieutenant Governor Driscoll, Secretary Walsh, and Secretary Lipson signed an [Executive Order](#) on Thursday, May 8 and released a new [age-friendly state plan](#) titled *The Massachusetts Plan* that outlines improved ways Massachusetts agencies may serve older adults. The Executive Order and plan highlight digital access and connectivity priorities for people 60 years and older.

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Massachusetts' Ecosystem In-Action at Net Inclusion 2025

MBI and members of the Massachusetts digital access ecosystem attended this year's Net Inclusion Conference hosted by the [National Digital Inclusion Alliance](#). The conference brought together practitioners and policymakers for learning and networking. MBI's Digital Equity Project Manager Ariana Fielding and Broadband and Digital Equity Grants Manager Caitlin Schubert presented on the importance of municipal planning and creative partnerships.

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In the News

Boston Digital Equity Report Outlines Gaps and Recommendations

Government Technology published the City of Boston's digital equity assessment results. The assessment was supported by MBI and will inform the city's 2025 Digital Equity Plan.

AccessPlus Awarded Grant to Bring Fiber to Affordable Housing

iBerkshires covered MBI's Residential Retrofit Program grant to AccessPlus, which will upgrade 587 low-income households in Pittsfield to high-speed internet.

On Social Media



Seeing Aervivo's Work in Action at Bay Meadow Apartments

At a recent Residential Retrofit site visit, [Aervivo](#) CEO Mike Hart shared how the project at [Bay Meadow Apartments](#) in Springfield will bring symmetric gigabit internet to 148 homes across 12 buildings, using a new fiber line, rooftop mesh radios and upgraded Category 6 (CAT6) cabling.

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Bringing National Insights on Digital Navigation to the North Shore

MBI joined the [Mass Association for Computer and Internet Resources \(MACIR\)](#) and [MassHire Metro North Workforce Board](#) for a National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) workshop for digital navigators. Key takeaways included inspire curiosity and encourage technology adaptation.

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