

## Barriers to Deployment



### The Cost to Connect- What is a Pole Attachment?

Utility poles represent the backbone of our nation's broadband infrastructure, especially in rural areas. These poles are **not typically owned by broadband internet providers**.

When providers want to extend their broadband service into rural areas, **they must first get permission and permits from the pole owners**. This process – called “make-ready work” – includes everything from permitting to renting space for equipment to replacing old or out-of-code poles.



### Driving Deployment and Maintenance Costs Up

Federal law regulates the rates, terms and conditions broadband providers pay to access Investor Owned Utilities Poles, but Municipal Electric Poles and Rural Electric Cooperative Poles are exempt.

In Florida, Something like this can bring the cost up **250% higher** for broadband providers. This exemption unnecessarily increases the cost to deploy broadband in rural areas, which are already more capital intensive to build out.



### Inconsistent Regulation & Increased Service Costs

While urban and suburban areas have more than 10 homes per pole, it can take more than 10 poles to serve a single rural home. Because of this, pole applications, replacement rules, rental fees and the dispute resolution process play a much more significant role in determining costs, timing, and the economic viability of buildout in these rural areas.

In fact, pole attachment make-ready costs make up approximately 35% of the total cost of constructing broadband infrastructure in rural areas, **with up to 25 cents of every dollar spent just on replacing older poles**.

## The Solution



### Streamline Broadband Equipment Regulations

The Florida Legislature should **enact legislation to fairly allocate pole replacement costs between municipal electric, rural electric cooperative pole owners, and broadband service providers**.

Pole replacement costs paid by broadband providers should be based on the net book value of the existing utility pole and, if necessary, the incremental cost of installing a utility pole with a greater capacity than the utility pole that an electric utility would have installed in the normal course of its operations.

**Provide Transparency. Expedite Pole Access. Increase Broadband Deployment.**

## Connect with us!



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