SHLB Coalition USF Congressional Policy Meeting Notes
12.09.25

Action Items
- SHLB's 2026 Fly-in is scheduled for March 10-12, 2026. Register here
- Last call for any comments to SHLB's USF policy priorities outline

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I.   **NTIA Listening Session on Screen Use (messaging, impact, and more)**
   A.   (You can listen to the video here).
   B.   Speaker: Keith Krueger (CoSN)
   C.   This mostly started as concerns over cell phone bans
      1.   Jonathan Haidt's book about cell phones at school
   D.   About 35 states have enacted cellphone bans
      1.   Some states have enacted a cell phone use policy
      2.   Some states like Florida and Texas have school districts that have entirely banned phones from schools.
         a)   NC's new law (effectively a ban during instructional time with some exceptions) goes into effect on January 1, 2026. All school districts in NC must comply:
            https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2025/Bills/House/PDF/H959v5.pdf
   E.   Screen time is a diverse term - some say it can include cell phones but could also include laptops
      1.   With the imprecise nature of the term, there is a lot of things getting mixed up
   F.   Screens in Balance Report and Tools - CoSN's report, which is endorsed by Natl PTA, NEA, principal orgs, AASA and school PR Assoc (NSPRA)
   G.   Reached out to National Education Associations like PTA if they had any policies in place about cell phone bans
      1.   Most were in favor, but want to ensure how to not ban all screens in their entirety as schools are continuously shifting towards digital content
   H.   There is a perception that it is a good thing that schools not only connect students but continue to connect them at home. But some also agree that there needs to be a balance regarding screen time.
   I.   Regarding NTIA's listening session
      1.   Here is Arielle Roth's speech from last week where you can see her certain stances:
         https://www.ntia.gov/speech/testimony/2025/remarks-assistant-secretary-arielle-roth-free-state-foundation-luncheon

J. The listening session has no official list of speakers
   1. It is 90 minutes long and 3 minutes each
   2. It is framing technology and devices as being bad
K. It is important to connect this endeavor to the "Eyes on the Board" Act that we saw last year
   1. Prior attempt by Senator Cruz to require every E-Rate recipient to have a plan for screen time (by age, grade, and minutes and hours you could be in front of a screen)
      a) SHLB's press release regarding the EOB Act from last year: https://www.shlb.org/blogs/shlb-cosn-setda-and-ala-oppose-the-eyes-on-the-board-act
   2. This becomes complicated because of different teaching styles and students with special needs and different learning styles.
L. Questions and comments:
   1. –: Rural students won't get teachers for certain subjects and have no option but to use technology to learn.
      a) Keith will be talking about this in his speech tomorrow about how technology can be a connector and not a barrier.

II. **New Wi-Fi Caucus (impact, issues to be addressed, and more)**
   A. Speaker: Mary Brown (Salt Point Strategies)
   B. Congressional Wi-Fi Caucus
      1. Bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Caucus relaunched on 12.02.2025
      2. Co-Chairs: Senators Ricketts (R-LA), Senator Rosen (D-NV), Rep Latta (R-OH), Rep Carter (D-LA)
      3. Dedicated to helping congress better understand the benefits of Wi-Fi
      4. There has been a 5G caucus, but not Wi-Fi
      5. Anticipate having various events throughout 2026; hoping to have SHLB in at least one of the events
   C. 2026 Outlook
      1. OBBA - in 2026 we can expect to see implementation
         a) 7125-7400 MHz for licensed cellular use leading to a required recommendation before 07.04.2027
         b) Looking at other cellular bands in the future: 4.4-4.9 GHz; 2.7-29 GHz
      2. Vendor community will be continuing announcements of Wi-Fi 8 with product availability in late 2026/early 2027
      3. World Radio Conference 2027
         a) Agenda Item: 7250-8400 MHz for Cellular
            (1) Opposition from China
         b) More pressure on other places other than US to access spectrum in the upper 6 GHz Band
   D. Questions and comments:

1. –: Can you say something about the relationship and use cases between CBRS and Wi-Fi?
   a) Unlicensed and bands used for Wi-Fi operate at low power. There are different flavors of low power. Primary use cases are indoor use. Good at connecting many users at one time. Sometimes Wi-Fi can be for outdoor use but the signal doesn't usually get thrown a long distance. CBRS is a compliment to that - it is of medium power. It can be used over wider areas, outdoors, or large indoor spaces. It is more efficient at connecting devices in larger campus settings. CBRS technology is LGE technology or Wi-Fi technology and is highly managed. Unlicensed is not centrally managed. Both technologies tend to be put in place to solve different use cases. They both share the characteristic that it is the facility owner who decides to build the network and decides what technology they want for whatever purpose they want (you define your own network).

III. **USF Working Group update.**
   A. Speaker: Joey Wender
   B. Joey has been meeting with Senate staffers who are part of the USF Working Group.
   C. Positive discussions regarding E-Rate and RHC
   D. They haven't gotten to some of the larger issues surrounding contribution reform
   E. No expected timeline about when they will release some type of document, legislative text, etc.
   F. SHLB will focus on this during the fly-in
      1. Fly-in is scheduled for March 10-12, 2026
      2. [Register here](#)

IV. Senate Commerce Committee Oversight Hearing
   A. Wednesday, December 17 @ 10 am ET
      1. https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2025/12/chairman-cruz-announces-fcc-hearing
   B. FCC Chairman Brendan Carr will appear before the Committee
   C. We suspect that media issues will be front and center
      1. But other topics could include broadband deployment, spectrum, affordability, digital opportunity grants
   D. Questions and comments:
      1. -: Why no apparent priority on USF contribution reform?
         a) -: Suspect that contribution reform is politically more difficult than some of the other reforms
      2. Do you see them doing this in one action or a series of actions?
         a) It's not explicit that this is the product that they will produce. If it were broken up, it could be because they want to make progress on select items

SHLB's next USF Congressional policy group call will reconvene on January 13, 2026 at 2:00 pm ET.

CHAT

2025-12-09 14:05:52 From to Everyone:

NTIA Listening Session on Kids' Excessive Screen Time:
https://www.ntia.gov/federal-register-notice/2025/ntia-listening-session-kids-excessive-screen-time

2025-12-09 14:08:17 From -: to Everyone:

https://www.cosn.org/2025-blaschke-report-toolkit/ CoSN Screens in Balance report and tools - Endorsed by Natl PTA, NEA, principal orgs, AASA and school PR Assoc (NSPRA

2025-12-09 14:10:52 From to Everyone:

https://www.ntia.gov/speech/testimony/2025/remarks-assistant-secretary-arielle-roth-free-state-foundation-luncheon

2025-12-09 14:14:25 From -: to Everyone:

NC's new law (effectively a ban during instructional time with some exceptions) goes into effect on January 1, 2026. All school districts in NC must comply.

https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2025/Bills/House/PDF/H959v5.pdf

2025-12-09 14:15:51 From to Everyone:

This was our press release regarding the EOB Act from last year:
https://www.shlb.org/blogs/shlb-cosn-setda-and-ala-oppose-the-eyes-on-the-board-act

2025-12-09 14:17:03 From to Everyone:

That was excellent! Thank you!

2025-12-09 14:17:41 From -: to Everyone:

Thank you. Very helpful summary and setting the context for the listening session.

2025-12-09 14:18:14 From -: to Everyone:

Thank you

2025-12-09 14:18:27 From to Everyone:

great quote

2025-12-09 14:22:07 From to Everyone:

Wi-Fi caucus:
https://troycarter.house.gov/media/press-releases/congressman-troy-carter-announces-relaunch-bipartisan-bicameral-wi-fi-caucus

2025-12-09 14:23:55 From to Everyone:
Castleberry: https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/search-filings/filing/120102507243

2025-12-09 14:24:18 From to Everyone:
Local Connectivity Lab: https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/search-filings/filing/1208285342556

2025-12-09 14:24:18 From-: to Everyone:
PART 1here is my social media posting on Screen Time last week: Among all the thoughtful conversation about students, screens and classroom focus, it's important to remember: technology absolutely belongs in K–12 classrooms as a learning tool when it's implemented well. Digital distraction is real, but it's not a reason to move backward — it's a reason to be more intentional about how we use the powerful tools that support today's learners.

As the national association for K–12 education technology leaders, the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) works with thousands of districts confronting these challenges daily. We see that when implemented well, educational technology can improve engagement, expand access to high-quality instructional resources, personalize learning and reduce inequities — especially for students who might otherwise lack the devices or connectivity needed for the modern world.

2025-12-09 14:24:32 From -: to Everyone:
PART II   To ensure implementation is done right, districts need clear policies, effective device-management and content filtering systems, classroom management tools, job-embedded professional coaching for educators and ongoing dialogue with families. Encouragingly, many districts are already doing this hard work — strengthening practices and refining approaches to ensure technology supports rather than undermines learning.

Students deserve both focused classrooms and the opportunities digital tools uniquely afford. School leaders must ensure technology is used wisely, safely and in service of learning.

2025-12-09 14:24:39 From to Everyone:
Imperial County: https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/search-filings/filing/12051866123012

2025-12-09 14:39:38 From to Everyone:
Thank you - some great information there

2025-12-09 14:40:05 From -: to Everyone:
can you leave your contact information? This is a great discussion.

2025-12-09 14:44:58 From to Everyone:

     https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2025/12/chairman-cruz-announces-fcc-hearing

2025-12-09 14:45:14 From -: to Everyone:

     Thank you so much WOW! Looking forward to staying connected! Need to jump...thanks everyone!

2025-12-09 14:45:43 From -: to Everyone:

     why no apparent priority on USF contributions reform?

2025-12-09 14:49:19 From -: to Everyone:

     It's probably good not to raise E-rate or RHC issues in the hearing

2025-12-09 14:50:03 From to Everyone:

     For anyone interested in BEAD non-deployment: Over 160 Bipartisan State Legislators Ask Secretary Lutnick to Release Non-Deployment Funds - https://www.benton.org/blog/states-dc-hands-our-bead-money