



# SHLB

SCHOOLS, HEALTH & LIBRARIES  
BROADBAND COALITION

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



MAY 2022



# A WORD FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

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Dear SHLB Community:

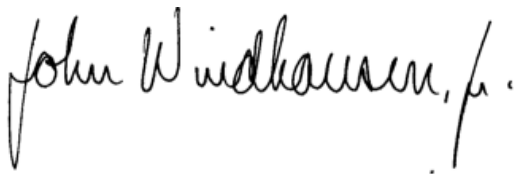
While the national public health crisis is abating, there is no end in sight for the digital divide. The SHLB Coalition continues fighting to help connect the millions of people without internet access, because we must. The pandemic proved how essential broadband is for life in the 21st century, and everyone in this country should have it.

When we reflect upon this past year, we're struck by the enthusiasm and new understanding of the key role that anchor institutions play to promote broadband access. Legislators opted to fund schools and libraries making broadband available "to and through" anchor institutions with the new Emergency Connectivity Fund, as well as the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which carries a whopping \$65 billion for broadband programs, and references "community anchor institutions" 29 times. And of course, we can't even begin to recap all of the headway made by state and local leaders.

Last year's progress on the digital divide is remarkable, to say the least. The SHLB Coalition continues working to maintain this momentum and increase our impact. We're pleased to report that in 2021, our influence in the broadband ecosystem grew even stronger as we passed the 300-member benchmark. Yet there is so much more work to do. The E-rate program may be under attack, the Rural Health Care program needs more funding to meet increasing needs, and we need more effective pole attachment and spectrum policies to provide ongoing support for broadband access and digital equity. Rest assured, SHLB is here and ready to do the work. In 2022 and beyond, we'll be advocating for these changes and increasing our engagement with the state policymakers who hold the keys to distributing substantial amounts of federal broadband support.

The policy accomplishments and our membership milestone described above only scratch the surface of the SHLB Coalition's work in 2021. In the pages that follow, we share the highlights of our year in deeper detail. Whether you're a SHLB member, a donor, or part of our community, your patronage is what made this impact possible. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



**John Windhausen Jr.**  
Executive Director  
SHLB Coalition



**Rachelle Chong**  
Chairwoman of the Board of Directors  
SHLB Coalition

# WHO WE ARE

In the 21st Century, affordable, high-quality broadband access is a non-negotiable necessity. And yet, millions of people cannot use the internet due to a lack of infrastructure, unaffordable prices, and other barriers. That's where we come in.

The Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public interest organization founded in 2009. We believe that by supporting and leveraging the resources, expertise, and local knowledge of community anchor institutions, our nation can end the so-called digital divide once and for all. From our home base in Washington, D.C., we work closely with policymakers and fellow public interest groups to turn our vision of a connected America into a reality. Our hundreds of members include a wide range of anchor institutions and organizations who support our mission and help us develop practical and effective policy recommendations.

## OUR MISSION

For every anchor institution in the country to have high-quality, affordable broadband that is open and accessible to the surrounding community.



### Community Anchor Institution (n.):

*A nonprofit community organization such as a school, library, hospital, health clinic, community center, higher education institution, public housing, house of worship etc. CAIs often need high-capacity broadband and facilitate greater use of broadband by vulnerable populations, including low-income residents, the unemployed, and the aged.*

## OUR STAFF



**John Windhausen Jr.**  
Executive Director  
*Joined 2009*



**Emily Olson**  
Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff  
*Joined 2014*



**Alicja Johnson**  
Communications Manager  
*Joined 2018*



**Eric Fredell**  
Membership Director  
*Joined 2020*



**Meghan Lasswell**  
Operations Coordinator  
*Joined 2021*

# 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Chairwoman**  
**Rachelle Chong**  
Law Office of  
Rachelle Chong



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**Julia Fallon**  
SETDA



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**Angela Siefer**  
NDIA



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GeoLinks



**Beverly Sutherland**  
EdTechnologyFunds



**Ray Timothy**  
UETN



# OUR MEMBERSHIP

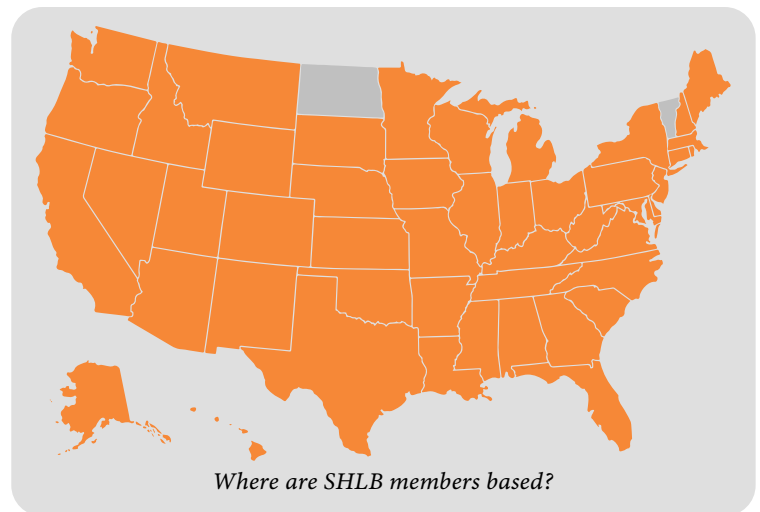
## STRENGTH IN NUMBERS, AND DIVERSITY.

There is no “SHLB” without our Coalition of members: Hundreds of organizations that span across the U.S. Coming in every shape and size, our members represent a wide variety of sectors, from healthcare to education to public interest to communications service providers and beyond. They share one thing in common: **Support for the SHLB Coalition mission.**

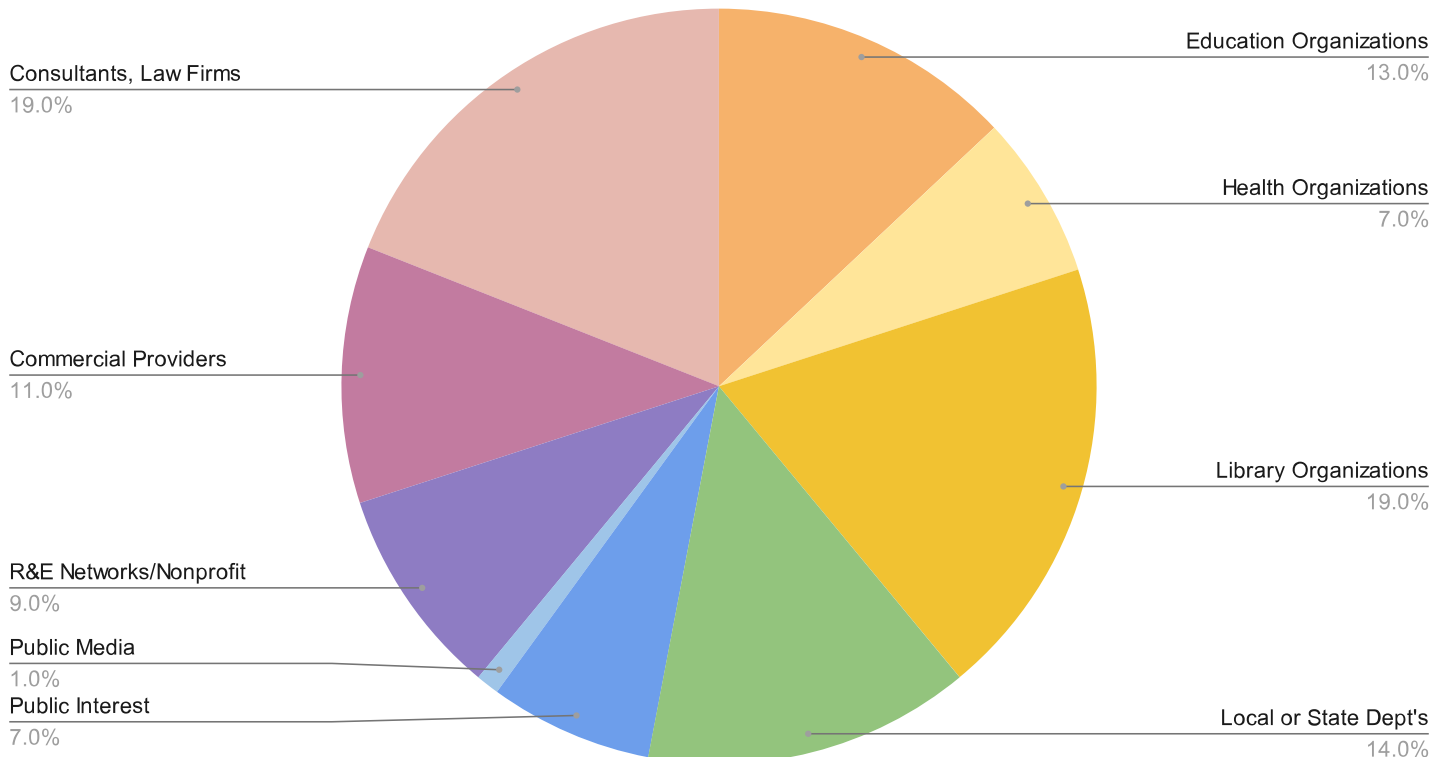
This diversity of perspectives allows us to develop policy recommendations that are realistic, effective, and commercially-viable.

## ABOUT THE 2021 COALITION

As of December 31, 2021...



Organizational Makeup of 2021 SHLB Membership





# OUR MEMBERSHIP

## A BIG “WELCOME” TO THE NEW SHLB MEMBERS OF 2021

Amazon (DC)  
American Council on Education (DC)  
America’s Public Television Stations (VA)  
AnSurTech (CA)  
Arizona State University (AZ)  
Arkansas River Valley Regional Library System (AR)  
Arlington County Government - Department of Technology Services (VA)  
Asotin Public Library (WA)  
Blount County Public Library (TN)  
Broadband.Money (CA)  
Brooklyn Public Library (NY)  
California State Library (CA)  
Cambium Networks (IL)  
Carpenter Consulting (CA)  
Charger Access, LLC (TN)  
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (NC)  
Choptank Fiber, LLC (MD)  
City of Seattle IT Department (WA)  
Dallas Independent School District (TX)  
Delaware Division of Libraries (DE)  
Digital Millennial Consulting (VA)  
Digital Wish (DE)  
DigitalC (OH)  
East Baton Rouge Parish Library (LA)  
Edge Smart Solutions (FL)  
Educational Consulting Associates (LA)  
Elite Program Specialists, LLC (LA)  
EveryLibrary (IL)  
Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization (NY)  
Fortinet (CA)  
ForwARd Arkansas (AR)  
Fresno Unified School District (CA)  
Georgia Public Library Service (GA)  
Grahamtastic Connection (ME)  
Harris County Public Library (TX)  
Hennepin County Library (MN)  
Hennepin County Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion (MN)  
Hoover Technology Consulting (PA)  
Horizon Health Care, Inc (SD)  
Indiana Broadband Office (IN)  
InterMountain Educational Service District (OR)  
Joseph Group, LLC (VA)  
KanREN (PA)  
KC Digital Drive (KS)  
Kelley Drye & Warren LLP (DC)  
Kenosha County Library System (WI)  
Kodiak Island School District (AK)  
Kwikbit (MN)  
Lane Education Service District (OR)  
Lawrence Public Library (KS)  
Libraries Without Borders (US) (DC)  
Library of Virginia (VA)  
Lit Communities LLC (AL)  
Lorain Public Library System (OH)  
Los Angeles County Education Office (CA)  
Los Angeles Unified School District (CA)  
Louisiana Optical Network Infrastructure (LA)  
Lucky Thirteen Design and Consulting (VA)  
Madison College (WI)  
Madison Public Library (WI)  
Maryland Office of Statewide Broadband (MD)  
Maryland State Library Agency (MD)  
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MA)  
Michigan Department of Education (MI)  
Milwaukee Public Library (WI)  
Minnesota Office of Broadband Development (MN)  
Missouri Department of Economic Development (MO)  
Modesto City Schools (CA)  
Monterey County Free Libraries (CA)  
Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council (DC)  
Natchitoches Parish Library (LA)  
New York State Library (NY)  
Nokia (GA)  
North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NC)  
Omaha Public Library (NE)  
Pioneer Management Consulting (VA)  
Poudre School District (CO)  
Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (MD)  
Queen Anne’s County (MD)  
Rodabaugh Education Group Inc. (MS)  
San Jose Public Library (CA)  
San Mateo County Libraries (CA)  
Santa Fe Indian School (NM)  
SBA Communications (FL)  
School Project for Utility Rate Reduction (CA)  
Shreve Memorial Library (LA)  
SmartWAVE Technologies (GA)  
Solutions4Change, LLC (VA)  
Southwest Colorado Council of Governments (CO)  
State Library of Iowa (IA)  
State Library of Ohio (OH)  
State Library of Oregon (OR)  
Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library System (CA)  
Swope Educational Consulting (TN)  
Talkie Communications (MD)  
The Enterprise Center (TN)  
Trilogy 5G (TX)  
Utah State Library Division (UT)  
Utopia Fiber (UT)  
Views on Learning, Inc (IN)  
Washington State Broadband Office (WA)  
Washington State K-20 Education Network (WA)  
West Virginia Network (WV)  
West Virginia Office of Broadband (WV)  
Westchester Library System (NY)  
Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center (NY)

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE FULL LIST OF SHLB MEMBERS](#)

# OUR POLICY GROUPS

Given the broad range of topics impacting community anchor institution broadband, SHLB members have the opportunity to participate in our seven monthly policy groups. Each group offers members a chance to grow their expertise and contribute to SHLB's advocacy on a deeper level. We'd like to thank the 2021 Chairs of each policy group for volunteering their time to make these groups possible, as well as every member who joined the discussions.



## E-rate and ECF

240 Participants

Chaired by:  
**Fred Brakeman**, Infinity Communications & Consulting



## Legislative/Infrastructure

182 Participants

Chaired by:  
**Tom Reid**, South Ohio Health Care Network



## Telehealth

132 Participants

Chaired by:  
**Rob Jenkins**, Colorado Hospital Association  
**Anne Turner**, ENA



## Spectrum

95 Participants

Chaired by:  
**Mark Colwell**, Voqal



## Broadband Mapping

86 Participants

Chaired by:  
**Stephanie Jane Edwards**, MCNC



## Higher Education

77 Participants

Chaired by:  
**Aimee Edwards**, Western Governors University  
**Joan Wodiska**, Pioneer Management Consulting  
**Steve Smith**, University of Nevada - Reno



## Pole Attachments

48 Participants

Chaired by:  
**Marc Paul**, Charter Communications  
**Ovidiu Viorica**, New Mexico Public Schools Facilities Authority

LEARN MORE ABOUT SHLB'S POLICY GROUPS HERE

# OVERHEARD FROM MEMBERS

## SELECT TESTIMONIALS

*“SHLB has truly been an asset during this pandemic period.”*

*“SHLB is a wonderful and necessary association that provides excellent service and support for all members.”*

*“SHLB is one of the most value-laden, cost-to-benefit ratio organizations in the U.S.”*

*“All in all, SHLB does a great job, and I’m grateful for your work.”*

## ...AS TOLD BY THE NUMBERS

**95%**  
*of existing SHLB members renewed their membership in 2021.*

**97%**  
*of members say SHLB membership is as valuable or more valuable than other membership organizations they participate in.*

**40%**  
*Growth in SHLB’s membership from 2020 to 2021.*



# OUR ADVOCACY

## THE “TO AND THROUGH” PHILOSOPHY

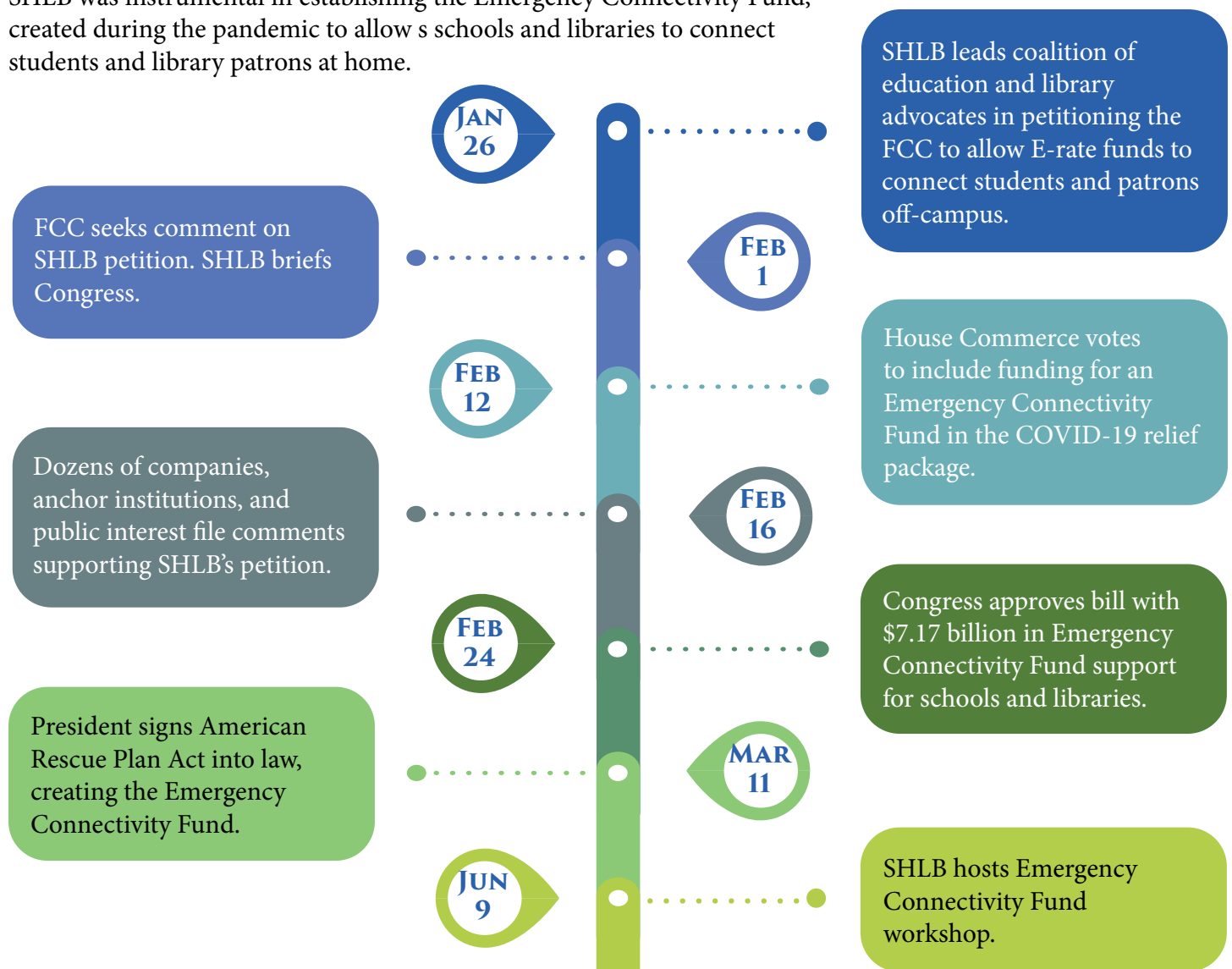


The SHLB Coalition works on a variety of different policy areas impacting broadband for anchors and the communities they serve, often with the goal of promoting our core philosophy: High-quality broadband should be deployed TO and THROUGH anchor institutions to reach surrounding residents. Why anchors? These institutions can be “jumping off” points to extend additional broadband deployment to surrounding residents who might not otherwise be able to afford or access it.

*As trusted local leaders, community anchor institutions are well positioned to close the digital divide for the millions who cannot connect at home, whether by facilitating access to internet service, devices, or digital literacy training.*

## CONNECTING STUDENTS AND LIBRARY PATRONS AT HOME - A TIMELINE

SHLB was instrumental in establishing the Emergency Connectivity Fund, created during the pandemic to allow schools and libraries to connect students and library patrons at home.



# OUR ADVOCACY

We're exceptionally proud of the impact our advocacy had on creating the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF), but our work didn't end at its creation. All told we held **over 50 meetings with Congress, the Federal Communications Commission, and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration**. Here are some additional ways we supported broadband for anchors and their users.

## COALITION BUILDING

*Closing the digital divide can't be done by one organization alone. During 2021, SHLB participated in a number of coalitions and initiatives. We were pleased to lead USForward and the Remote Learning Coalition. We also participated in Airwaves for Equity, Broadband Together, the Public Interest Spectrum Coalition, Broadband Connects America Coalition, and the American Connection Project.*

## SECURING SCHOOL & LIBRARY NETWORKS

*Network security is critical for anchor institution networks, yet the FCC's E-rate program doesn't provide any support for protecting school and library broadband. SHLB joined several organizations in petitioning the FCC to make such cybersecurity solutions eligible for E-rate. We also made the request in our comments regarding the Eligible Services List.*

## HELPING RURAL CLINICS

*At SHLB's request, the FCC extended the deadline for Rural Health Care applicants to apply for funding and delayed the implementation of its new rates database, as many healthcare organizations were still overwhelmed with the pandemic in early 2021.*

## ECF - ROUND TWO

*SHLB continued to work with the FCC on implementing the ECF program throughout 2021. Our advocacy persuaded the FCC to establish an additional application window, so that smaller schools and libraries who could not apply during the initial application window would have an opportunity to secure funding.*

## #POLEPROBLEMS

*Pole attachments and other rights-of-way issues are one of the biggest barriers to building new broadband infrastructure. SHLB developed and promoted "Pole Attachment Principles," a framework to help policymakers create smart solutions to make-ready and other pole problems..*

# OUR ADVOCACY

## **NTIA PRIORITIZES ANCHORS**

*The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced a new infrastructure grant opportunity in June that requires grant recipients to serve anchor institutions.*

## **ANCHORS IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE BILL**

*In November 2021, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into law, making an historic \$65 billion in funding available for broadband access. SHLB worked closely with Congress to ensure that the bill recognizes anchors' need for gigabit capacity. All told, the law references community anchor institutions 29 times.*

## **GIFT OF E-RATE**

*At SHLB's request, the FCC extended its waiver of the E-rate gift rule for another year. The move allows schools and libraries participating E-rate to receive - or continue receiving - free broadband services and devices from providers.*

## **PROTECTING USF**

*In the tail end of 2021, a misguided lawsuit was filed which contested the constitutionality of the USF. SHLB quickly filed to intervene in support of the FCC and to protect USF.*

## **BUILDING UP TELEHEALTH**

*In establishing the rules for the second round of COVID-19 Telehealth Program funding, the FCC adapted many of SHLB's recommendations to improve the administration of the program.*

## **CREATING A SUSTAINABLE USF**

*SHLB has spent several years investigating the Universal Service Fund (USF) contribution base. In 2021, SHLB joined INCOMPAS and NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association to issue an economic study on the topic, and led 254 organizations in a call to action on USF contributions reform.*

## **'TO AND THROUGH' HBCU'S**

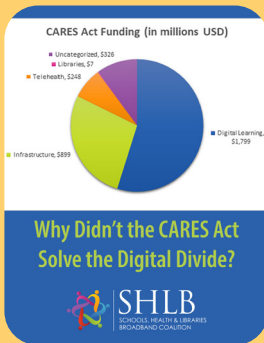
*The NTIA began accepting its first applications for the Connecting Minority Communities Program in August 2021, a pilot to empower historically-Black colleges and universities (HBCU's) and other minority-serving institutions to expand broadband and digital skills for their students and nearby residents. The pilot program was created with the SHLB 'To and Through' blueprint in mind.*



# EDUCATING OUR COMMUNITY

In addition to public interest advocacy, the SHLB Coalition strives to be a reliable information source for all things related to anchor institution broadband. We keep our members up to speed via biweekly calls and an exclusive Listerv. Here are some of the ways we share information with policymakers and the broader community.

## 2021 RESEARCH



### *Why Didn't the CARES Act Solve the Digital Divide?*

SHLB reviewed publicly-available data to explore how states used CARES Act funding to improve broadband for unserved and underserved Americans.



### *USForward*

SHLB partnered with INCOMPAS and NTCA to release research from USF expert Carol Mattey detailing possible options to stabilize the USF contributions mechanism.

## GUIDANCE FOR POLICYMAKERS AND OUR COMMUNITY

### *Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) Virtual Workshop*

On June 9, SHLB hosted an in-depth virtual workshop to help schools and libraries apply for the ECF. More than 300 attendees showed up to receive advice from over 20 experts, and to hear remarks from Senator Ed Markey (D-Mass.) and FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel.

### *Senate Broadband Caucus Presentation*

On March 16, the Senate Broadband Caucus invited SHLB Executive Director John Windhausen to contribute to its broadband priorities for 2021. Windhausen emphasized the importance of addressing anchor connectivity issues in upcoming policy measures.

### *Libraries and the ECF - Q&A Session*

Libraries seeking ECF funding have faced a unique set of challenges with the application process. To address library-specific ECF concerns, SHLB partnered with the American Library Association and the National Digital Inclusion Alliance to host a widely-attended virtual Q&A session.

### *Webinars - Asking the Tough Questions*

In 2021, SHLB hosted 10 webinars to explore every broadband policy issue ranging from pole attachments to network security to the Universal Service Fund contributions and beyond. On average, over 200 attendees tuned in for each discussion.

# RAISING AWARENESS

Our nation simply can't address problems that leaders aren't aware of, which is why SHLB raises the visibility of the nuanced issues impacting anchor institution connectivity. In 2021, our expertise was cited 156 times in 51 different media publications.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR MEDIA COVERAGE

*Click on each publication logo to read the full story.*



“Schools and libraries really know the types of solutions that are going to best suit their communities because, in one area, a hot spot device might be sufficient for connecting disconnecting students. In another area, a hot spot is useless just due to the available coverage,” [Alicja Johnson] said. “That’s where we were hoping to see more flexibility.”



“Our argument is even connecting people off-campus can be for educational purposes,’ said John Windhausen Jr., founder and executive director of the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition. ‘Education does not only happen at school. Kids do homework at night and that’s education.’”



“We’ve made progress, but we were supposed to have solved the problem by now,’ Windhausen said. ‘We need a multifaceted, coordinated national, state and local effort to invest in high-capacity broadband everywhere. And we ought to do that in the next five years, before the next pandemic.’”



“The [Universal Service Fund contribution] rate jumped by more than half in the past year, raising fears of more hikes soon. Victims would include ‘the low-income consumers who are stuck with traditional phone services,’ said John Windhausen Jr., executive director of the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition. ‘The need for reform is urgent,’ said Windhausen[...], ‘Otherwise there is a risk the entire universal service system will collapse.’”



“While the FCC in 2010 issued a goal for all anchor institutions to have gigabit-speed connectivity by 2020, the country fell short of that goal, said John Windhausen Jr. [...], ‘Even worse, we don’t even know how far away from the goal we are,’ he said. ‘We’re not collecting the info that would tell us how fast we have to go and how much investment we need to make to get gigabit connectivity.’”



“We need the broadband infrastructure bill,’ said SHLB’s Windhausen. ‘Because there are huge areas of the U.S. where we don’t have any broadband.’”

# THANK YOU!

SHLB can't reach a lofty goal like "internet for all" without some incredible supporters (like those of you who have read all the way to the final pages of this report!). While we lack the space to thank everyone who helped us pursue our mission in 2021, please know that we appreciate and value every SHLB member, every sponsor, and every donor.

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

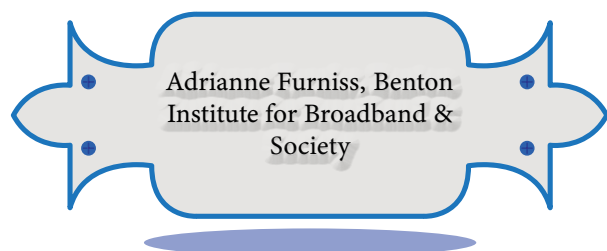
### Premier Sponsor



### Champion Sponsors



## PLATINUM DONORS - \$5,000



## GOLD DONORS - \$1,000

Blair Levin  
Dan Kettwich  
Funds For Learning  
Glen Echo Group

NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association  
Tom and Carol Wheeler  
Voqal

## SILVER DONORS - \$500

Beverly Sutherland  
Broadband Law Group  
Broadband Legal Strategies  
Deborah Sovereign  
E-Rate Central  
Infinity Communications & Consulting  
Janice Meyers

Jeff Reiman, in memory of Tom Reiman  
JJ McGrath  
Larry Irving  
Law Office of Rachelle Chong  
Michael Flood  
William and Karen England Foundation

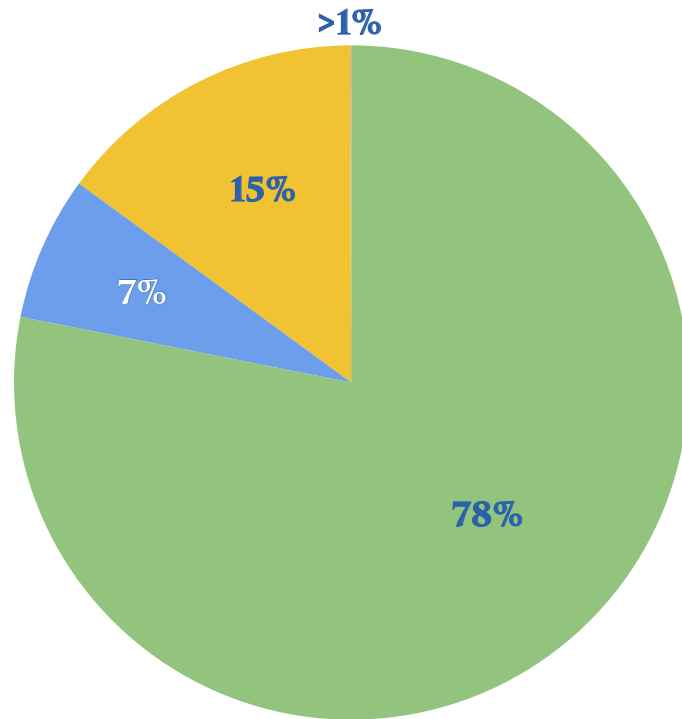


# OUR FINANCIALS

Behind every impactful nonprofit, there is funding of some sort. The SHLB Coalition receives financial support primarily from membership dues and events, as well as donors and sponsors. *N.B. While SHLB does accept funding from commercial organizations, we function with independence and always act in the best interest of our mission.*

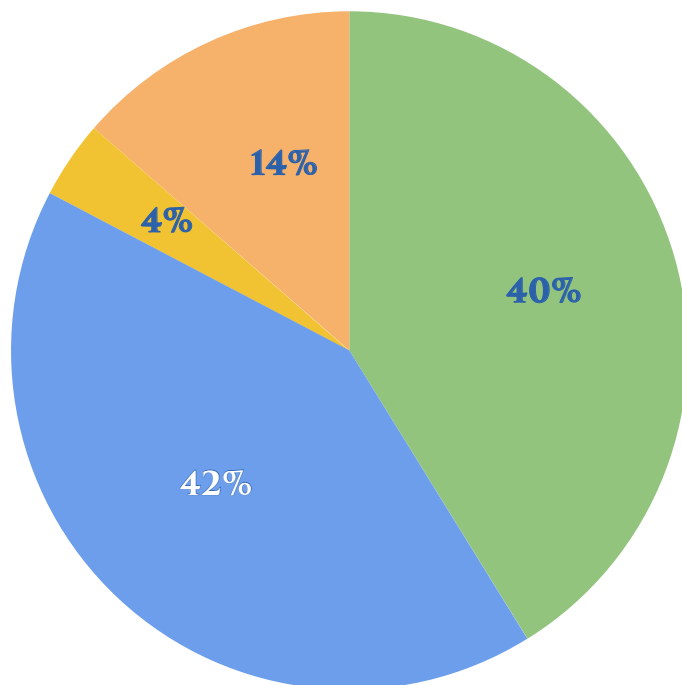
## 2021 REVENUE

- Membership  
\$613,406
- Other Programs  
\$54,359
- Contributions  
\$116,924
- Investments  
\$488



## 2021 EXPENSES

- Membership  
\$291,799
- Other Programs  
\$294,277
- Fundraising  
\$26,236
- Administration  
\$96,524



# THANK YOU!

Last but certainly not least, we're grateful to everyone who participated in our #BuildWithSHLB Giving Tuesday campaign. Thanks to individual donors and a generous matching grant from the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society, we raised \$25,659.20, putting us well over our \$20,000 fundraising goal.

To show our appreciation for your support, the SHLB team performed a broadband-themed rock song, which (against our better judgment) you can watch online by clicking on this photo:



Thanks for reading. If you appreciate SHLB's work, let us know with a donation!

[DONATE NOW!](#)