

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

In an ever-evolving digital landscape, SHLB remains steadfast in its mission to expand broadband access for anchor institutions. This report highlights our strategic efforts, key achievements, and vision for bridging the digital divide in 2024 and beyond.



A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDER

Dear SHLB Community,

As we reflect on another remarkable year, we also find ourselves at a moment of transition. After 16 years of leadership, John is stepping down as Executive Director to embark on new adventures. John led an incredible journey building SHLB into a long-term, sustainable public interest organization with over 300 members nationwide.

Together, we have accomplished so much—expanding affordable, high-speed broadband access to thousands of schools, libraries, healthcare providers, and other community anchor institutions. More importantly, we have helped connect millions of people—students and educators, librarians and patrons, healthcare professionals and patients, and individuals from all walks of life.

While this transition marks a new chapter for SHLB, rest assured that the Coalition remains in good hands. The SHLB Board made a very wise decision in hiring Joey Wender as the next Executive Director. Joey's background—as head of the Capitol Projects Fund, senior aide to Senator Ed Markey, and graduate of Harvard Law School (not to mention his overall good nature)—will bring enormous benefits to the organization. And with Kristen E., Kristen C., Saskya, and Lauren now having several years of experience running SHLB, the transition should be high-speed and without any latency!

Of course, there is still much to do. The incoming administration may seek to roll back some of our most significant victories, and SHLB members are counting on E-Rate funding to support hotspots, school bus Wi-Fi, and cybersecurity. As NTIA evaluates changes to the BEAD program and Digital Equity Act awards, we must continue advocating for digital literacy training and gigabit connectivity for anchor institutions.

SHLB will also remain steadfast in educating Congressional lawmakers on the importance of these programs in closing the digital divide and solving the homework gap in communities across the country. And we will continue leading the charge in the courts to defend the constitutionality of the Universal Service Fund.

As for the future, John plans to remain engaged and helpful in whatever way he can. While his exact role is yet to be determined, this is not goodbye—it's simply “to be continued.”

Thank you for your continued support, dedication, and partnership in this important work.

Sincerely,
John and Cindy



John Windhausen Jr.
Executive Director
SHLB Coalition



Cindy Aden
Chairperson 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

SHLB advocates for policies and programs that enable anchor institutions to obtain and promote open, secure, high-quality broadband services to support connectivity and opportunity for all.

Community Anchor Institution (n.):

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

OUR STAFF AS OF FALL 2024



John Windhausen Jr.
Executive Director
Joined 2009



Kristen Corra
Policy Counsel
Joined 2022



Eric Fredell
Membership Director
Joined 2020



Kristen Engebretsen
Chief Operating Officer
Joined 2023



Saskya Cabral
Marketing and PR Director
Joined 2023



Lauren Rachuba
Operations Manager
Joined 2023

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Strong leadership is essential to achieving SHLB's mission of expanding broadband access for anchor institutions and the communities they serve. Our Board of Directors provides the vision and expertise necessary to drive meaningful policy change and bridge the digital divide. In 2024, we were pleased to welcome Charlotte Bewersdorff (Merit), Adam Geisler (Tribal Ready), D'Andre Weaver (Digital Promise), and Tracy Doaks (MCNC) as the newest members of our board. Their diverse experiences and commitment to digital equity has strengthened our collective efforts.



**Chairperson
Cindy Aden**

University of Washington,
iSchool



**Vice-Chairperson
Philip Neufeld**

Executive Officer, Tech Services,
Fresno Unified School District



**Treasurer
Cathy Cruzan**

President
Funds for Learning



**Secretary
Melissa Slawson**

General Counsel and VP of Government
Affairs and Education, GeoLinks



Luis Wong

Chief Executive Officer,
Network InitiativesKent



Tracy Doaks

President & CEO,
MCNC



Kitty O'Connor

Head of Healthcare and Erate Legal
and Compliance, ENA by Zayo



Angela Siefer

Executive Director,
NDIA



Lauren Moore

NY State Librarian, NY State
Education Department



John Windhausen Jr.

Executive Director, SHLB



Beverly Sutherland

President & CEO,
EdTechnologyFunds



Charlotte Bewersdorff

VP of Community Engagement,
Merit



D'Andre Weaver.

Chief Digital Equity Office,
Digital Promise



Julia Fallon

Executive Director,
SETDA



Ty Beauchamp

Division Director IT, Harris County
Public Library (TX)



Adam Geisler

President & COO,
Tribal Ready

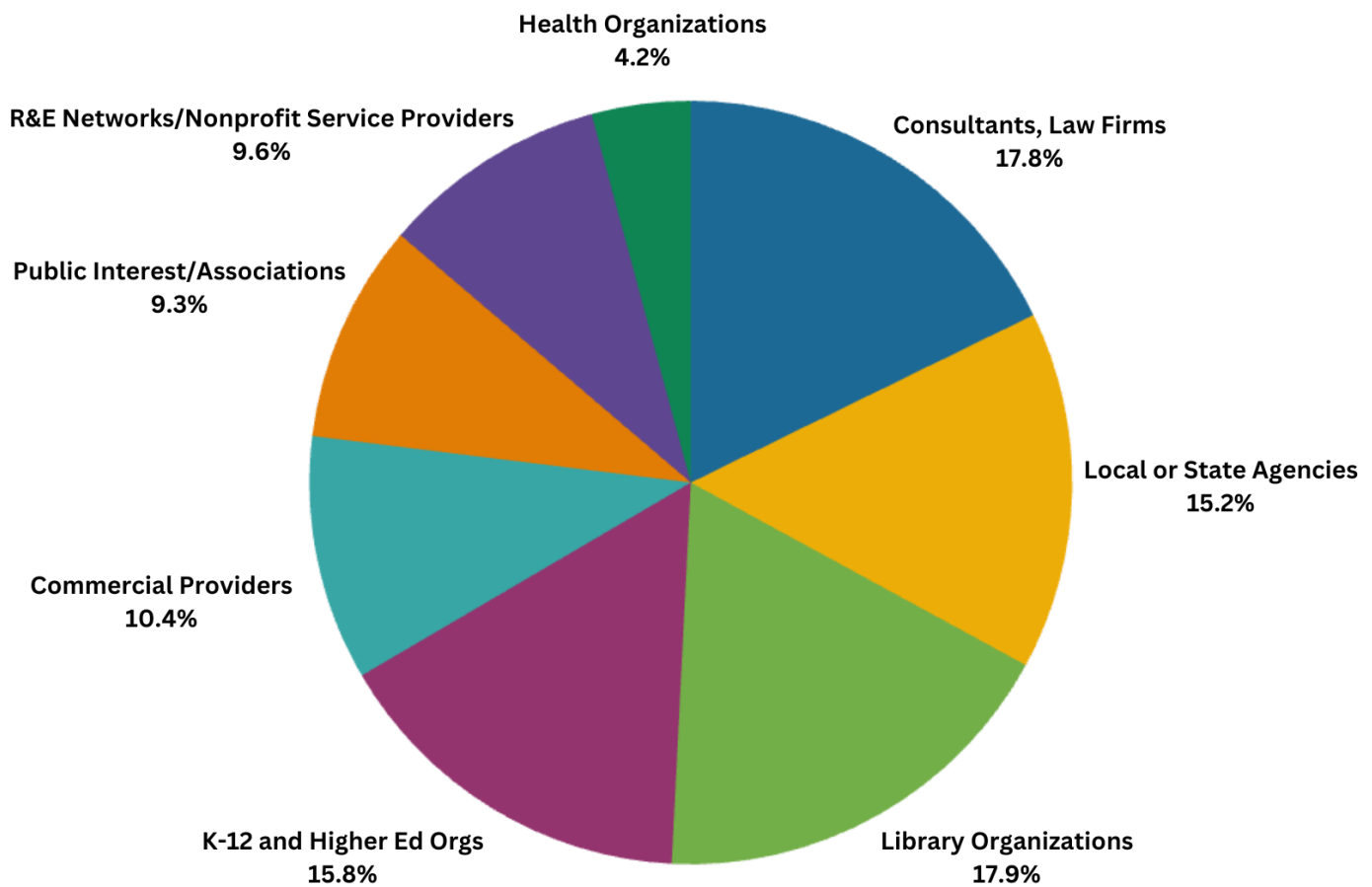
OUR MEMBERSHIP

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS AND DIVERSITY

In pursuing its mission, the SHLB Coalition works with a diverse group of organizations from across the broadband ecosystem. Organizations that become members support the SHLB mission and benefit from SHLB's leadership and advocacy on numerous broadband policy issues. SHLB members work together to identify and shape broadband policies that recognize and strengthen the vital role of anchors in making broadband accessible to all Americans. SHLB's advocacy benefits from the diverse and real-world viewpoints of its members, enabling SHLB to develop policy recommendations that are realistic, effective, and commercially-viable.

MEMBERSHIP BREAKDOWN

In 2024, SHLB totaled 320+ members. The Coalition is based in almost all US states, except North Dakota.



[APPLY TO BECOME A MEMBER TODAY](#)

OUR POLICY GROUPS

SHLB convenes hundreds of member organizations from across the broadband ecosystem that work cooperatively to shape SHLB's advocacy efforts. While our members are diverse, they recognize the importance of anchor institutions, and help to drive SHLB's mission forward.

Given the range of broadband-related topics that impact anchor institutions, SHLB members can participate in five specifically-focused policy groups, recurring monthly (listed below). We also convene a bi-weekly all members policy call to review the various policy issues facing the organization. Learn more about our policy groups here.



E-Rate



Anchors for Digital Opportunity



Wireless



Broadband Deployment



Rural Healthcare

We also thank the 2024 policy group co-chairs for volunteering their time and energy to make our monthly calls productive and informational. We also thank every SHLB member who joined the discussions and supported our advocacy efforts.

Julia Legg, E-Rate Central
Rachel Botts, Kellogg & Sovereign Consulting
Rebecca Ranallo, Cuyahoga County Public Library
Tom Esselman, Digital Equity Program Office of Greater Kansas City

Marci White, Redbud Telecom Consulting
Lesley LaFile, Independent Health Network
Jenny Miller, EducationSuperHighway
Dianne Lindstrom, Los Lobos Consulting, LLC
Michael Calabrese, OTI/New America
Phil Neufeld, Fresno Unified School District

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SHLB'S POLICY GROUPS HERE](#)

ANNUAL EVENTS

In 2024, SHLB hosted four in-person events to keep our members informed on the latest developments in broadband policy and infrastructure. These included a Poles Symposium in Washington, DC, SHLB's State Broadband Leaders Network (SBLN) Reception in Portland, OR, and Philadelphia, and our flagship AnchorNets Conference in Arlington, VA, in October - where we had a record of 400+ attendees!



Another milestone was SHLB's San Diego trip and tribal land visits, where we engaged with community leaders to better understand broadband challenges and opportunities in Indigenous communities.



Additionally, we hosted six webinars covering key broadband policy issues, including E-Rate hotspots, the 5th Circuit's decision on the Universal Service Fund, cybersecurity funding opportunities, and post-election broadband policy.

On average, more than 250 attendees participated in each session, reflecting the strong interest in these critical discussions.

Here are the expert speakers who made the webinars possible:

SHLB 2024 WEBINAR SPEAKERS

							
Dr. Klesha King	Lauren Abner	Gina Spade	Sean Lev	Allison Baker	Sue McNeil	Julia Legg	
							
Andy Schwartzman	Ansley Erdel	Michael Flood	Johnny Schieber	Molly O'Connor	Michael Romano	Glenn Richards	Seth Cooper

Thank you to everyone who helped make these events a success!

2024 BIG WINS

USF COURT CASES

SHLB actively defended the Universal Service Fund (USF) in court. Following the Fifth Circuit’s ruling that the USF was unconstitutional, SHLB filed a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court, which was granted. A final decision is expected in May or June 2025. SHLB also filed in support of the FCC’s school bus Wi-Fi decision in a case before the Fifth Circuit.



E-RATE AND CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVES

In 2024, the FCC adopted several SHLB recommendations under the “Learn Without Limits” initiative. The Commission approved E-rate funding for Wi-Fi on school buses, a long-standing SHLB priority to help students complete homework during long commutes. Additionally, the FCC established a \$200 million cybersecurity pilot program for schools and libraries. The Commission also expanded E-rate eligibility to include lending out hotspot devices, ensuring affordable internet access for students, school staff, and library patrons at home.



POLE ATTACHMENTS

In 2024, SHLB hosted a dedicated Pole Attachments Event, bringing together industry leaders, policymakers, and broadband advocates to address critical challenges in broadband deployment. The event highlighted the need for clearer timelines on make-ready adjustments for large broadband projects and expanded self-help options for pole attachers. SHLB continues to advocate for fair cost allocation when poles need replacement to accommodate new attachments. The discussions and outcomes from this event will shape future policy efforts to streamline broadband expansion.



LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

On Capitol Hill, SHLB successfully opposed the “Eyes on the Board” Act, a proposal that would have restricted schools from receiving E-rate funding unless they banned social media on school networks. However, this issue is expected to resurface in the coming year.



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

SHLB strengthened its coalition in 2024 by welcoming T-Mobile and Cisco as corporate sponsors. They join existing partners—Zayo, Charter Communications, and Ready—in supporting SHLB’s mission to expand broadband access for anchor institutions. Their commitment enhances SHLB’s advocacy, research, and initiatives to bridge the digital divide.



GIVING TUESDAY & MAGAZINES

SHLB's #PassTheRock Giving Tuesday campaign was a huge success, raising over \$20,000 to support broadband advocacy for community anchor institutions! This year, we engaged our network with a creative and fun challenge—encouraging donors to decorate a rock, take a selfie, and pass it along to spread awareness.

As milestones were reached, SHLB staffers joined in with [Macarena dance videos](#), rallying even more participation. Thank you to everyone who passed the rock!

#PASSTHEROCK MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



MAGAZINES

In June 2024, SHLB visited San Diego to tour schools and health centers, highlighting broadband expansion in tribal areas. That same month, SHLB hosted a Poles Symposium in D.C., convening policymakers, industry leaders, and advocates to discuss pole attachment policies and broadband deployment challenges. These efforts reflect SHLB's commitment to closing the digital divide through collaboration, education, and policy engagement.



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 2024, please know that we appreciate and value every SHLB member, every sponsor, and every donor.

CORPORATE SPONSORS



PLATINUM DONORS - \$2,500+



GOLD DONORS - \$1,000+

Gina Spade
Adam Geisler
Cathy Cruzan
Funds for Learning

SILVER DONORS - \$500+

Tom and Carol Wheeler
Tillman and Millie Rodabough
Education Group
Gabriel Thrasher
Charlotte Bewersdorff

Michael Flood
William England
Bretton Himsworth
Tracy Doaks
John Windhausen

ANCHORNETS 2024 SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

E-Rate Central
Funds for Learning
Ready.net
Zayo Group
NetSync
Kellogg & Sovereign Consulting
Charter Communications

The Broadband Group
Tarana Wireless
Cisco
Google Fiber
MCNC
T-Mobile
Airvine

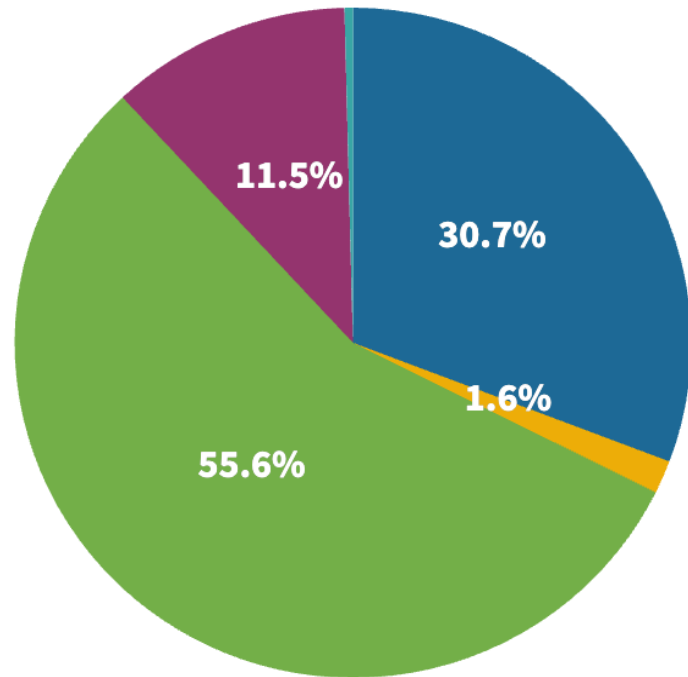
Broadband Legal Strategies
Connected Nation
Fatbeam
Finley
Tribal Ready
MobileBeacon
SJSU
Verizon

OUR FINANCIALS

A strong financial foundation powers SHLB's mission to expand broadband access. We're primarily funded by membership dues, events, sponsorships, and philanthropy, maintaining full independence despite commercial partnerships. In 2024, we explored new revenue sources, including a pro bono bylaw review, the Employee Retention Tax Credit, and in-kind travel donations for site visits. We're also expanding our corporate membership base to sustain our impact while representing anchor institutions with limited budgets.

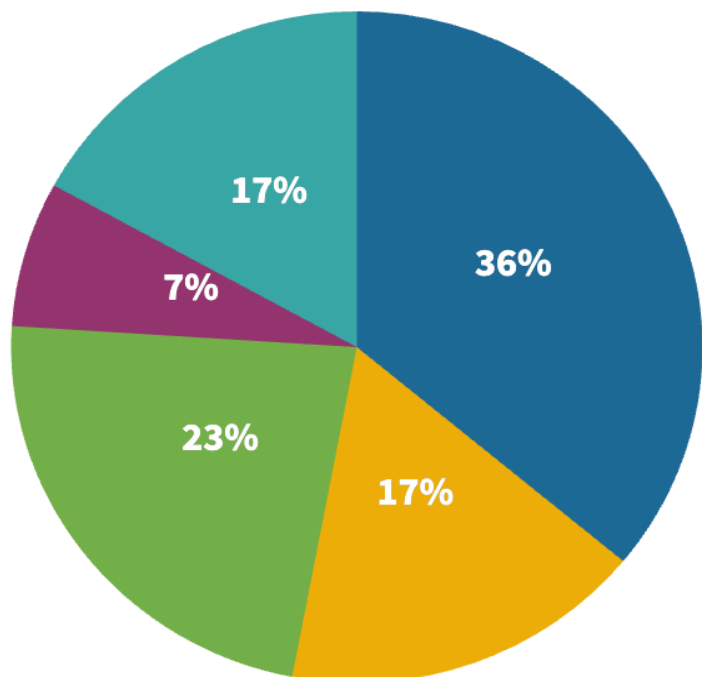
2024 REVENUE

- Administrative
\$147,616
- Events
\$392,854
- Membership
\$710,365
- Fundraising
\$21,052
- Advocacy & Education
\$5,000



2024 EXPENSES

- Events
\$458,368
- Lobbying
\$84,998
- Membership
\$293,790
- Advocacy
\$218,054
- Administrative
\$218,031



WE APPRECIATE YOU!

We are thankful for broadband for bringing us together, and can't wait for an even better 2025!



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

[DONATE NOW!](#)