Trump kills broadband grants, calls digital equity program “racist and illegal”



President Donald Trump said he is killing a broadband grant program that was authorized by Congress, claiming that the Digital Equity Act of 2021 is racist and unconstitutional.

“I have spoken with my wonderful Secretary of Commerce, Howard Lutnick, and we agree that the Biden/Harris so-called ‘Digital Equity Act’ is totally UNCONSTITUTIONAL. No more woke handouts based on race! The Digital Equity Program is a RACIST and ILLEGAL $2.5 BILLION DOLLAR giveaway. I am ending this IMMEDIATELY, and saving Taxpayers BILLIONS OF DOLLARS!” Trump wrote in a Truth Social post yesterday.

The Digital Equity Act provided $2.75 billion for three grant programs. As a National Telecommunications and Information Administration webpage says, the grants “aim to ensure that all people and communities have the skills, technology, and capacity needed to reap the full benefits of our digital

economy.”

The digital equity law, approved as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, allows for grants benefitting a wide range of Americans who lack reliable and affordable Internet access. The law covers low-income households, people who are at least 60 years old, people incarcerated in state or local prisons and jails, veterans, people with disabilities, people with language barriers, people who live in rural areas, and people who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group.

“President Trump’s move to end the Digital Equity Act is blatantly unconstitutional,” consumer advocacy group Public Knowledge said. While Trump is “labeling efforts to address racial inequity as discriminatory themselves,” his action “will also severely impact his voter base of white Americans who live in rural areas in red states, including veterans and the elderly,” the group said.

Some states already received funding last year. If Trump cancels grants that haven’t yet been distributed, it will likely result in lawsuits against the administration.

The law allows funding to be used in a variety of ways, including “to make available equipment, instrumentation, networking capability, hardware and software, or digital network technology for broadband services to covered populations at low or no cost,” and “to construct, upgrade, expend, or operate new or existing public access computing centers for covered populations through community anchor institutions.” It can also cover training programs for using technology and workforce development programs.

https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2025/05/trump-is-killing-broadband-grants-because-some-of-them-help-minorities/