

# You can now tell the FCC just how broken the internet is for you



It's not at all controversial to say that internet service sucks in the United States. As part of its plan to update coverage maps in the US, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in a break from tradition, is finally asking average Americans to report which internet services are *actually* available where they live.

In the past, the FCC has made these coverage maps with self-reported data from the ISPs themselves, an inherently compromising decision because internet service providers will naturally want to paint the rosiest picture possible. Since the FCC uses these maps as evidence for proposed regulation, it can seriously hinder the FCC's ability to make sure there's actual competition in the market and that the internet is being responsibly distributed. For instance, a map might show that you have 11 broadband providers when you actually only have one or two real options.

Now, the FCC will finally go to the people actually using the internet to learn what's up, though you may need to communicate clearly to be heard. The form the FCC is using for your responses is decidedly rudimentary; it looks like a general complaint form, and doesn't ask any specific questions about broadband at all (the only reference is in the header). But the FCC says it's a stopgap on the path to a more detailed and specific reporting tool. For now, perhaps you can take a look at the FCC's current crappy maps at your address, and tell the FCC whether you actually have the kinds of choices that the ISPs claim you have.

Hopefully, once the Broadband Data Task Force finishes collecting these new data points, we'll have more accurate maps that show the worrying reality of American internet, and be able to do something about it.

<https://www.theverge.com/2021/3/22/22345533/fcc-broadband-data-collection-program-fix-the-internet>