



## Funding Available to Improve High-Speed Internet Access in Rural PA

By Senator Scavello

PEN ARGYL - Applications will be accepted until Feb. 22, 2022 for up to \$1.15 billion in loans and grants to help people in rural areas get access to high-speed internet.

Those eligible for the funding, which is being made available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's ReConnect Program, include state and local governments, corporations, limited liability companies and cooperative organizations.

The funding is available for projects that serve rural areas where at least 90% of the households lack broadband service at speeds of 100/20 Mbps. Priority is given to projects that will serve people in low-density rural areas and areas lacking internet access services at speeds of at least 25/3 Mbps.

## VA Alerts Veterans About Printing and Mailing Delays Affecting Claims

By Senator Scavello

PEN ARGYL - Many veterans have been experiencing long delays with receiving correspondence from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

The VA announced that due to supply chain issues and staffing shortages, the vendor contracted to provide printing services for the VA is experiencing delays in printing and mailing notification letters to veterans and claimants, with the disruption potentially impacting the ability of some claimants to meet required deadlines via written correspondence with the VA.

In response to the mailing delays and to protect the best interest of claimants, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) is extending its response period by 90 calendar days for claimants with letters dated between July 13, 2021 and Dec. 31, 2021.

If a claimant does not reply to a time-limited notification, such as making an election of benefits or services or reporting for a scheduled compensation and pension examination, VBA will not take adverse action to deny, reduce or terminate benefits and services unless: 1) the claimant is contacted and there is documentation of his or her right to respond; 2) the requested information has been received; or 3) the response period has lapsed.

Veterans and claimants with questions can contact the VA at 800-827-1000.



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**Doors open at 4:00pm  
Movie starts at 5:00pm  
Santa Will Make An Appearance at 7pm**

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