

Milwaukee Ald. Rainey: Milwaukee's digital divide promulgated by service providers, analysis shows

Posted on Monday, Oct 24, 2022

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

A recent study shows that internet service — how fast it is, and how much you pay — might depend on where you live Milwaukee.

In Milwaukee, poorer neighborhoods and neighborhoods that have historically been subjected to illegal, discriminatory redlining are more likely to get worse internet deals. Sadly, it is part of a national trend in which poorer, less-white neighborhoods are paying more for bad internet service.

This is absolutely **UNACCEPTABLE**, and it is featured in a [new analysis](#), published by the Markup and the Associated Press, that examined internet service offers to more than 1 million addresses across the country, including Milwaukee.

How can we have an equitable city where thousands of households are without access to job opportunities, housing information, to vital news media and journalistic information, to educational opportunities and connections, basic online government resources, and so much more?

We now are learning that internet service providers will charge customers living just blocks apart the same price for vastly different internet speeds and overall quality. This is simply criminal and discriminatory behavior, and should be investigated as soon as possible by federal and state consumer protection agencies!

For those who want internet service, there is a federal [low-cost internet service program](#) that is currently helping low-income families pay for devices and high-speed service. The **Affordable Connectivity Program** offers a discount of up to

\$30 a month for internet bills, or \$75 on tribal lands, as well as money to help pay for laptops, computers, or tablets.

According to [data released in August](#) by the nonprofit EducationSuperHighway, just half of 131,639 eligible households in Milwaukee have enrolled in the program (statewide, Wisconsin is lagging in enrollment, with 28% of eligible households participating).

To find eligibility guidelines and apply at [the program website](#).

Additionally, for those without internet service: United Way is helping people apply, and internet access is available at Milwaukee Public Library branches.