

**Ohio Library Council
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ITEM NO.: **5.C**

MEETING DATE: **July 18, 2025**

SUBJECT: **OPLIN Report**

SUBMITTED BY: **Don Yarman**

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

E-Rate

On June 27, the Supreme Court ruled in a 6–3 decision that the FCC's delegation of E-Rate management to USAC is not illegal, overturning the Fifth Circuit's ruling that it violated the Constitution for Congress to delegate management of the Universal Service Fund to the FCC and for the FCC in turn to subdelegate that authority to a private company (i.e. USAC). Andrew Schwartzman, Senior Counselor of the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society published a good piece, [*The Supreme Court Lifts A Cloud That Hung Over USF*](#), outlining the impact decision and the likely outcomes, including the pressing need to diversify the funding mechanism.

The states' E-Rate coordinators met at ALA, where they heard from contacts at USAC that the FCC had ordered a pause on funding approvals for hotspot hardware and services, pending congressional action. The Senate had already passed a resolution to overturn the expansion of E-Rate funding for hotspots and schoolbus wifi; the measure is waiting for action in the House.

Statewide Web-Based Digital Skills Platform

Northstar Digital Literacy was selected as the statewide web-based digital skills platform by BroadbandOhio's working group, but before contracts could be finalized President Trump declared the Digital Equity Act unconstitutional and ended the program immediately. As with the other executive orders that eliminated congressionally-passed programs, this has been challenged in court. Meanwhile, BroadbandOhio has allocated funds from a different project to keep this one moving.

Managed Branch Connections

OPLIN now provides connectivity to 77 library branch locations. For \$2,000 a year per branch, OPLIN will contract with a service provider, pay the monthly bills, monitor and support the connection, and file and collect the E-rate. Applications are open now for libraries wanting OPLIN to manage their branch connectivity next year.

<https://www.oplin.ohio.gov/branch-circuits>