A Better Way to Spend $42.5 Billion

$42.5 billion. That's the federal government's budget for connecting rural communities to high-speed internet. To date, **exactly zero homes have been connected**. The reason seems to be the **Biden administration's insistence on using fiber optic cable for the connections.** Apparently someone looked at the cost of fiber: $5,000 per mile minimum. $42.5 million buys, at most, 85 million miles of installed cable. Sounds like a lot, right? Ignoring the fact that there are many millions of miles of roads in the U.S., how long will it take? Let me propose **a better way to spend $42.5 billion**. Bonus: the entire project could be completed in weeks.

(click for larger image)

The key is Starlink, **the SpaceX subsidiary that uses satellites to connect the far corners of the world. You can buy a Starlink terminal directly from the company for $299.** If you're in a hurry, **Walmart sells a top of the line terminal for $540**. The monthly fee is $120, about what we spend for our home fiber connection. No fiber, no wires, just electronic waves. **At $540, $42.5 billion would buy about 78 million stations**. Buy direct from Starlink and **you get 142 million**. Either of those would

probably solve the problem. (**Current U.S. population is about 330 million folks.**)

So why doesn’t the government simply start distributing Starlink terminals? The company is owned by Elon Musk. Oh.

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